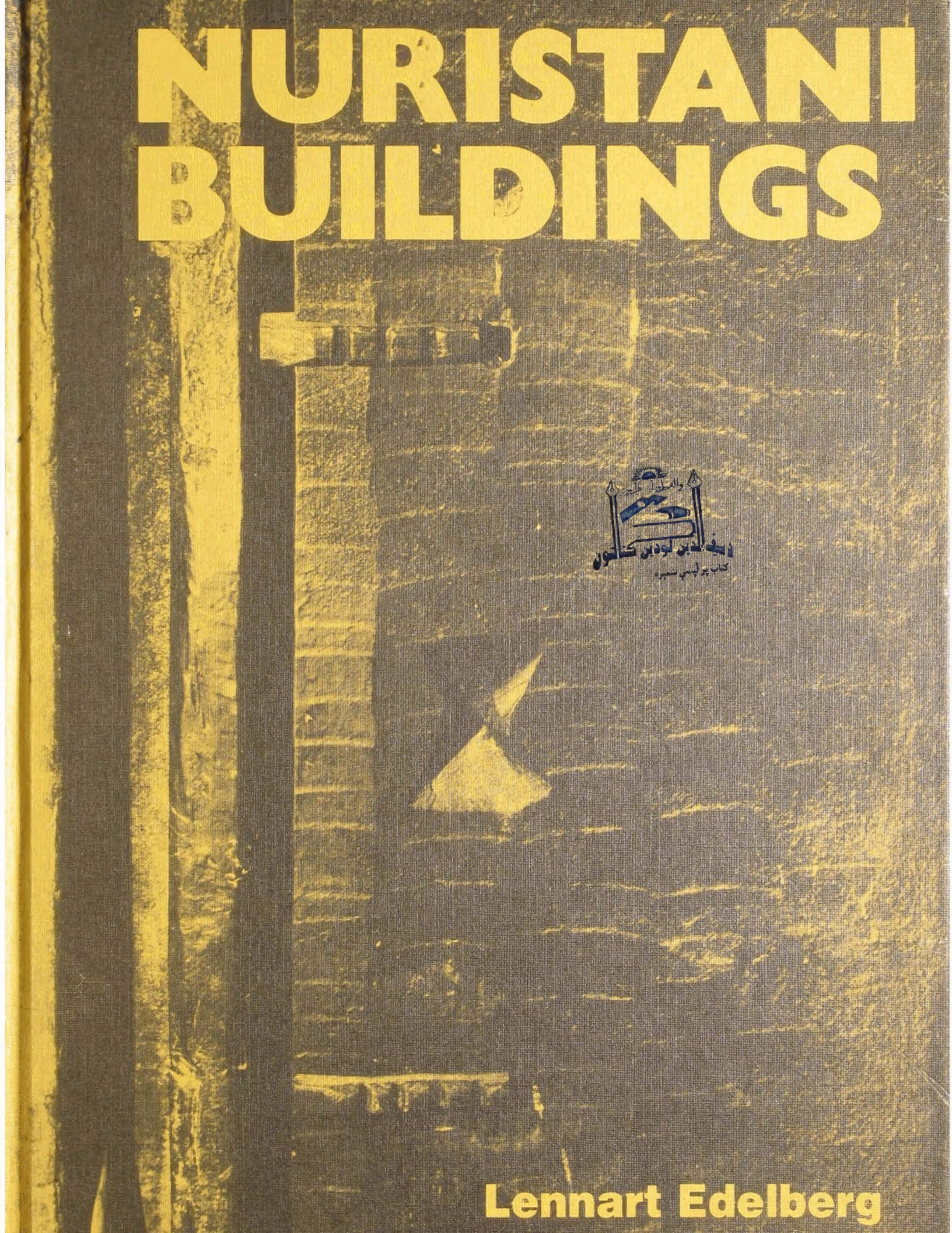
NURISTANI BUILDINGS



Lennart Edelberg

NURISTANI BUILDINGS

by
LENNART EDELBERG

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Front cover: *The inside of a door from Keshtagrom. Midway between the bolts is a keyhole, and lower down an indentation, serving as a door-'handle'. Photographed by the author in 1964.*
Back cover: *The outside of a door from Chimi, Waigal region, leading to a store-room or hay-loft under the living quarters. It has a carved head beneath some symbols, and a keyhole. The surface has been smoothed with an adze, giving the wood a lively texture. Photographed Nov. 9, 1970, by Torkil Funder.*

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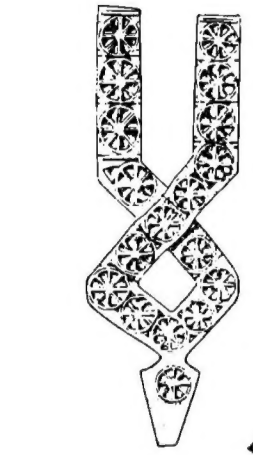

به
«باری»
هنرمندان نورستان
تقدیم میشود

To the bari,
the craftsmen of Nuristan

Fig. 1. Abdullah Wakil – bari – from Keshtagrom (left) speaking with the author in Kabul. Photograph: Schuyler Jones, 1970.

Contents

Preface

The preparation of the book *Nuristani Buildings* took up Lennart Edelberg's thoughts for many years, but he did not live to see its completion. While at work on it he died of coronary thrombosis at his home in Ribe, on the 11th of November, 1981.

From August 1st, 1981, he had obtained a year's leave from his post as a lecturer at Ribe Katedralskole. Thanks to a grant from The Danish Research Council for the Humanities he could now devote his time to finishing the book. He embarked upon the enterprise, full of enthusiasm and energy, when suddenly, a very full and active life came to an end.

Shortly before his death Lennart Edelberg had arranged to work with Mrs. Birte Stubsgaard on the final preparation of the book, and they had gone over the drawings and photographic material together. Mrs. Stubsgaard is English by birth and an architect, with qualifications from The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen. Her abilities were an excellent supplement to Lennart Edelberg's work on Nuristani buildings. But Lennart Edelberg died before this teamwork got properly started.

It seemed natural that this arrangement should be followed up. Mrs. Stubsgaard carefully went through the material left in Edelberg's study, and found complete parts of the manuscript and drawings, as well as rough drafts, sketches, and photographs. Subsequently, two grants from The Danish Research Council for the Humanities enabled her to edit this material, and also to write captions, correct drawings, and translate parts of the text, maintaining wherever possible Lennart Edelberg's characteristic way of expressing himself.

At the same time, a supporting team was formed of people who had all travelled in Nuristan, and who had worked with Lennart Edelberg. This group consisted of Dr. Schuyler Jones, Oxford,[1] Klaus Ferdinand, Aarhus, and Torkil Funder, Ribe.

It is a most fortunate and vitally important circumstance that Dr. Schuyler Jones has been able to partake extensively in the preparation of this publication; he has gone through the editor's manuscript, corrected and added to it, and written chapters III, IV and XI. Furthermore, Mr. Torkil Funder has written the section on Upper Bashgal, which he visited in 1970. Dr. Zia Choopan and Senior lecturer F. Vahman have translated the introductory sections and the epilogue to Persian (Dari). Mr. Ulf Timmerman has helped with the layout of the book, and the ethnographer Svend Castenfeldt has yielded a valuable job in checking and correcting the proofs.

Mrs. Margot Edelberg has very kindly placed Lennart Edelberg's study at the editor's disposal and has afforded all possible assistance, also when the working team held meetings in the Edelberg home.

1. Dr. Schuyler Jones is University lecturer in Ethnology and Assistant Curator at the Dept. of Ethnology and Prehistory, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. He has co-operated closely with Lennart Edelberg for 20 years.
Klaus Ferdinand is Senior lecturer at the Dept. of Ethnography and Social Anthropology, Aarhus University, Moesgaard Museum. He travelled with Lennart Edelberg on the Henning Haslund-Christensen Memorial Mission to Afghanistan in 1953-54.
Torkil Funder is a lecturer in geography and biology at Ribe Katedralskole and for 16 years a close friend of Lennart Edelberg.

The South Jutland University Centre has given substantial financial support and has helped with practical matters during the preparation of the manuscript.

According to the original arrangement made between Lennart Edelberg and Head Curator Poul Kjærum, this book appears in the Jutland Archaeological Society's series.

Finally, it is gratefully acknowledged that the manuscript is published with the support of the Danish Research Council for the Humanities, and that High Court Judge V. Giese's Foundation has defrayed the expenses of printing a number of pictures in colour.

Klaus Ferdinand

Prologue

My purpose is to bear witness to the superb skill of the carpenters of Nuristan.

The villages of Nuristan are of outstanding interest in the way they fit harmoniously into their natural environment, the steep forested mountain ridges of the mighty Hindu-Kush.

The houses of Nuristan are remarkable for their fine architecture and the ingenious solutions to construction problems which even enable them to withstand the frequent earthquakes afflicting this unstable zone. Furthermore they are beautiful, ornamented as their timbers are with exquisite carving, the style of which differs from one valley to the other.

Many of the houses in Nuristan are so solid that they date from Kafir time, i.e., before 1896, when the population was still very isolated and worshipped numerous gods and goddesses, some of whom had Aryan names. Between 1896 and 1900 the Afghan Army invaded this region, conquered the people and converted the "Kafirs" (pagans) to Islam. Kafiristan was renamed Nuristan: "land of light".

Apart from houses and mosques, there are a number of other structures in Nuristan, for instance bridges, irrigation canals, haylofts, barns and watermills. All these functional and architectural splendours are a result of the craftsmanship of the carpenters.

The carpenters of Nuristan had – as all craftsmen of Nuristan (as to Parun see below) – the status of slaves, even after the conquest of Kafiristan in 1896 and more or less up till 1922, when King Amanullah, according to information given by local villagers, abolished slavery in his kingdom. Thus craftsmen are not bought and sold any longer. But as Schuyler Jones put it, 'It is... difficult to enforce legislation against attitudes' (Jones 1974: p. 108) and the craftsmen have not achieved equality even today. The farmers and the craftsmen do not intermarry; neither can the two groups partake of a meal together. In fact the farmers of Nuristan do not consider craftsmen members of society, i.e. their society. They accept them only as part of the *environment*. When the farmers emphasize that the people of Kafiristan or Nuristan until recently could be proud of an egalitarian society, having no chiefs and no families with hereditary leadership, they of course see their society from the inside.

To those, however, who view Nuristan from the outside, the society appears to be a class system in which the activities of the lower classes are fundamental for the cultural life of the ruling farmers. The lower classes consist of two groups: the specialized craftsmen, who are called *bari* (blacksmiths, leatherworkers, carpenters, woodcarvers, potters and weavers), and the unskilled workers – in Waigal called *šewala* and in Bashgal *lāne* (*loni*) – originating from socially degraded people who had lost their property of fields or livestock. They may weave and make baskets and pottery, but their products lack the quality which characterizes the products of the *bari*, and they are mainly – in contrast to these – employed as shepherds or fieldworkers for the farmers.

For Nuristan as a whole things are not, however, so simple as I have indicated. In the Parun Valley, the religious centre of old Kafiristan, most crafts are practised by farmers. Only in Pashki, the lowest village in the valley, are a couple of *bari* families to be found. They work, however, only as blacksmiths and builders of

water-mills, in which capacities they serve the whole valley. Among the farmers of the Parun Valley there may exist some kind of division of labour among the different clans. Thus members of the *wäči*-clan, which is religiously attached to Disni, the goddess of fertility, are referred to as carpenters. Consequently the people of Parun are looked down upon by the other people of Nuristan.

The free livestock-herding and landowning people of Nuristan have until recently taken the presence of *bari* and *šewala/lāne* for granted. But that is no longer possible, because both the *bari* and the *šewala/lāne* may leave and certainly do leave the region. The farmer may dispense with the services of the *šewala/lāne*, but he would never stoop to do the work of the *bari*. Neither would he be able to, for the tradition of craftsmanship disappears with the *bari*.

If one asked a farmer in the Bashgal or the Waigal Valleys: "You say that there has been democracy in Nuristan since ancient times, but what about these *bari*? How big is their influence?", he would look at you with the expression of a Danish farmer being asked what say his animals had in the management of the farm.

As we see, the craftsmen are not regarded as equals in the eyes of the farmer. If the Nuristan farmer is proud of his house and its decoration, it is because he has either by giving feasts of merit, or as a successful mediator between rival clans, made himself worthy to embellish his house with stylized goat horns or other symbols of rank and prestige. But I have never heard a farmer praise a craftsmen for his artistry.

In 1970 a replica of the upper part of a Waigali house was constructed by Egon Hansen and Viggo Thomsen at the Moesgaard Museum in Denmark. That same year Abdullah Wakil from Keshtagrom, who was a *bari* (craftsman) by origin, came with me to Denmark. He approved and finally inaugurated the house by sacrificing a horned sheep.

Abdullah was a man of the world with extensive experience of much of South Asia from Basra to Calcutta. He was therefore, in spite of his *bari* origin, simply not to be ignored. During Abdullah's stay in Denmark he and I discussed Nuristani social attitudes on various occasions. One day we were talking about the fact that Nuristani farmers' sons in Kabul do not even call their craftsman compatriots by name – merely *'bari'*. If one asks, "Why do you only call him *'bari'*?", they reply, "Because he is *bari*!" It was on this occasion that Abdullah said something that I have often thought about since. He said, "Yes, but things in Nuristan will never be good until we are all *bari*!"

The Nuristani craftsman is more skilled in a number of fields than other craftsmen in Afghanistan and can therefore easily find work elsewhere in the country. Moreover, many *bari*s join the army or air force. If this continues, Nuristan will be drained of its craftsmen, and who will then build the farmers' irrigation channels, bridges, barns and watermills, not to mention their beautiful houses – the Nuristan farmer's status symbol?

Either the farmers will have to serve an apprenticeship with the craftsmen – and what farmer will do that, when the social attitude to craftsmen is as described? – or the craftsmen must strive for better social conditions, so that the drift away from Nuristan will be stopped. Only in this way will it be possible to ensure that their traditional skills are not lost, but remain available for the future.

Otherwise an economic and cultural impoverishment of Nuristan will certainly take place.

The indigenous population, with its intimate knowledge of the problems of livestock herding and arable farming in a richly variable mountain country, can of

course be disregarded and an attempt be made to manage Nuristan from the outside. This will without any doubt result in even greater damage than that which now occurs due to overgrazing and the advanced destruction of the forests.

If the farmers of Nuristan are not sufficiently aware of this, and allow themselves to be the object of profit-seeking alien forces without the Nuristanis' intimate knowledge of the region, it is certain that, in the ecological sense, they will slaughter the goose which lays the golden eggs. For dairy products and timber – not to speak of the potential water power – are worth their weight in gold to Afghanistan.

Due to the mountainous terrain and the periodically heavy precipitation, Nuristan's ecological environment is extremely sensitive. It is primarily the crowns and roots of the trees which provide natural protection for the sparse soil on the steep mountainsides. Without extreme care the destruction of the forests can be catastrophic. In the wake of the destruction of the forests follows extensive earth erosion caused by thunderstorms. This erosion is already very obvious in the Waigal area. After this it is not far to the point where the sources of wealth in Nuristan will be destroyed. Even the organization and exploitation of water power can, under these conditions, be problematic.

These dangers are becoming manifest in Nuristan at the present time when the drift of artisans has begun.

On a rock face in Bashgal stands the handwriting of Imra, the Creator. This has hitherto been illegible for man, but the writing which is appearing on the rock walls of Nuristan in these years demands to be read and understood – and obeyed. If Imra – just as in the myth – is not to wipe the sun and moon from the Nuristan sky and envelop its mountainous world in darkness (Robertson, 1896: p. 385).

Fig. 2:"Imra's handwriting". An inscription on rocks north of Bagalgrom (Bashgal Valley) from the Kafir period, cf. Robertson 1896: p. 202. It consists of V-shaped figures and dots in brown and white colours. Photo: L.E. June 20, 1948.

Foreword

This publication should have been the work of an expert – an architect. I am, however, a biologist by profession and participated as a botanist in the 3rd Danish Expedition to Central Asia 1947-1949 planned and led by Henning Haslund-Christensen.

But fate has had a part, together with inspiration from two fascinating personalities: Haslund-Christensen, who died in Kabul on the 12th of September 1948, and Hans Henrik Engqvist, and as a result the material has come into my hands.

Many interesting buildings, which were undamaged in 1948 when I first visited Nuristan, were altered or in ruins when Ahmad Ali Motamedi, Klaus Ferdinand and I visited the area in 1953. Even more were in ruins in 1964.

In the period 1965-1975 a new danger arose – a danger for which I feel partly responsible. My publication about the Nuristani silver cups (1965) created a considerable interest far beyond ethnographic circles and led to a demand for such specimens.

The article by Thomas Alvad and myself on the Nuristan harp (1953) and the one just mentioned on the silver cups were naturally written out of scientific interest and with respect for the culture which was hidden away in the almost inaccessible mountain world of the Hindu-Kush. The effect these articles had on collectors came as a shock to us. The culmination was reached in 1974: a pair of columns which Knud Paludan had photographed *in situ* in 1948 and which I had published in 1961 in an article on wooden statues of the gods and ancestors, was offered for sale in 1974 by a European firm of antique dealers in a special announcement to a number of museums in the West. The columns, according to information obtained from the authorities in Afghanistan, must have been smuggled out of the country. The same applies to the silver cups which are found in private collections outside Afghanistan.

At the same time special tourist trips were arranged in which the participants were sure of an income on their return to the West by selling the objects obtained so cheaply in Nuristani homes. Nuristani furniture and other household objects are at the moment in private hands from the U.S.A. to the Cape, while the Kabul Museum with its very limited funds has been able to acquire only a few specimens.

It does not require special foresight to see how these circumstances can quickly lead to a loss of identity among a distinctive minority. This means in effect, an impoverishment of the people and a loss for Afghanistan.

All this has disturbed me greatly and I find it impossible to be silent about something which means so much to me. On the other hand, I believe that many who had only a low opinion of Nuristan and its people have since, thanks to publications by Ahmad Ali Motamedi and myself, started to change their attitudes. From appending epithets such as "primitive", "wild" and "avaricious" to the people of Nuristan, they have begun to appreciate the rich and, in many respects, unique culture of these people.

A purpose of this book is therefore to share with others my admiration for Nuristani architecture. At the same time I naturally hope that the authorities in Afghanistan, now that the danger is obvious, will take steps to ensure that the farmers of Nuristan do not continue to destroy what its craftsmen have made.

I hope that this book, in addition to stimulating a genuine interest in Nuristani architecture, will provide a stimulus for more competent research and may open the way for a reasonable conservation practice, such as suggested at the Hindu-Kush Cultural Conference at Moesgaard, Denmark, in 1970.

Most of all it would please me if Nuristani building traditions did not fall into disuse and were allowed to come into their own as a source of inspiration for future building in the area.

* * *

The material on buildings collected during 1948-49 and 1953-54 was systematized in Denmark by architect H. H. Engqvist of the The Royal Academy of Fine Arts. He took a lively interest in the various Nuristani constructions, and encouraged me to continue these investigations in 1964 and 1970.

Without the extensive hospitality and patience shown me by my Nuristani friends, I would never have been able to examine their houses so thoroughly (Cf. Robertson 1896: p. 504). I owe them so much that can never be repaid, especially Abdul Rahim from Pashki, who opened my eyes to the atmosphere and influence of religion in their everyday life (Cf. Edelberg 1972: p. 43) and Abdulla of Keshtagrom, who has travelled so widely that he appreciates the cultural heritage of his homeland.

Travel in Nuristan demands a great deal of physical endurance; both in 1964 and in 1970 a number of high passes were crossed – the highest was over 4.400 metres. The villages themselves are often difficult of access. In 1964 there were constantly four of us travelling together: my wife Margot, who took tape-recordings, and my daughter Susanne; they both helped me with my surveying and measuring, and when we were exhausted, my faithful assistant and travelling companion since Haslund's time, Akbar, used to encourage us and cheer us up with his marvelous sense of humor and delicious, though plain, cooking.

In 1970 Margot and I travelled with our daughter Miriam, and Ulf Timmermann, who assisted me with my measuring and photography. They took all our adversities in their stride, as, for instance, when our camp was washed into the river during a cloudburst in Zhönchigal (in the Waigal area).

I gained more insight into and admiration for the Nuristani art of building in 1969-70 when Egon Hansen and I built a Nuristani house for the Moesgaard Museum. He is the indispensable practical man about the museum, and very inspiring to work with. We copied a house from the Waigal area, using some original building components; not many, but vital ones.

I am especially grateful to Ahmad Ali Motamedi, General Director of the Antiquities of Afghanistan, for his never failing friendship and enthusiasm on our journey in 1953 and ever since then.

While working on the Nuristani buildings I have been fortunate to have had the support of five scientists who have placed their own, as yet unpublished, valuable materials at my disposal: Georg Morgenstierne, Georg Buddruss, Schuyler Jones, Wolfgang Lentz and Torkil Funder. I am exceedingly grateful to them for their assistance and for the many hours we have spent together talking about Nuristan. Without very lengthy discussions with Schuyler Jones on the social structure and the environments of Nuristani communities, my rendering would have been very inadequate.

دیباچه

هدف من ازین رساله یا کتاب عبارت از تصدیق کردن و گواهی دادن مهارت عالی نجاران نورستان است.

قریه جات نورستان با طبیعت با حول خود که عبارت از نشیبی های پوشیده از جنگل سلسله کوه با عظمت هندوکش است یك تناسب خاص و موزونی دارد که علاقه بیننده را جلب می کند.

خانه های نورستان از نگاه معماری طوری ساخته شده که در آن تمام جهات مسئلهٔ ساختمانی الشمول مقاومت بمقابل زلزله های کثیر الوقوع در منطقه در نظر گرفته شده. خانه‌ها خیلی مقبول بوده ستونها و بعضی از قسمت های چوبی آن با کنده‌کاریهای زیبا و مقبول که شیوه شان از یك دره به درهٔ دگر نورستان فرق می کند مزین گردیده است.

یك مقداری از این خانه ها از زمان قبل از معرفی دین اسلام به نورستان یعنی قبل از سال ۱۸۹٤ مسیحی می باشد یعنی از آن زمانی که باشندگان این سرزمین یك زندگی تجرید شده داشته و به عبادتخداهای متعدد و مختلف که بعضا نامهای آریائی داشتند مشغول بودند. بجاماندن این خانه های قدیمی رسانندهٔ استحکام و دوام آنهاست.

منطقهٔ نورستان قبلا بنام کافرستان یاد می‌شد. در بین سالهای ۱۹۰۰-۸۹٤ قشون افغانستان منطقه راتسخیر و مردمان این سرزمین را که بزبان محلی کافر نامیده می‌شدند و مفهوم کافربودن را می رساند به دین اسلام مجبور و نام سابق آن، کافرستان رابه نورستان که معنی روشنی دارد عوض کرد.

گذشته از مساجد و خانه ها یکتعداد تاسیسات و ساختمانهای دیگر مثل کانالها، پل‌ها، انبارها، طویله ها، وآسیاب های آبی نیز بملاحظه می‌رسد که از نگاه فن معماری با ارزش اند. تمام این تاسیسات و بناها محصول استادی و مهارت خاص نجارات نورستان است.

نجاران نورستان مانند دیگر گروه‌های حرفوی آن منطقه موقف غلام را داشتند که موقف اجتماعی شان تا زمانهای بعد ۱۸۹٤ و تا اندازه‌ای تا سالهای ۱۹۲۲ ادامه پیدامی‌کند. در این وقت است که پادشاه افغانستان امیر امان الله (نظر به روایت مردمان منطقه) غلامی را در مملکت قدغن اعلام و بدین ترتیب خرید و فروش غلام بشمول اهل حرفه که بقسم غلام خرید و فروش می شدند از بین می‌رود.

نظر به سکایلر جونز (۱۹۷٤) Schuyler Jones تحمیل این امر نهی خرید وفروش غلام بر مردم مشکل بوده و ازین سبب تا امروز هم اهل حرفه و کسبه کاران حق مساوی را

با دیگران ندارند . چنانچه این امر در قسمت ازدواج بین فامیل ها به وضاحت دیده شده بتواند . مثلا ازدواج بین فامیلهای صاحبان زمین و فامیل گروههای حرفوی صورت نمی‌گیرد حتی این دو گروه از یك سفره غذا نمی‌خورند یعنی در حقیقت امر صاحبان زمین نورستان اهل حرفه را جزء جامعهٔ خود ندانسته و بلکه آنها را جزء طبیعت ماحول ومحیط تلقی می کنند .

صاحبان زمین ادعا می کنند نورستان از یك سیستم اجتماعی که در آن افراد دارای حقوق مساوی اند برخوردارست. ریاست و موقف پیشوا بودن به ارث برده نمی‌شود . این ادعای آنها از سبب نگرش و دیدن جامعه از درون است.

آنهائی که جامعهٔ نورستان را از بیرون می‌بینند جامعهٔ نورستان را یك جامعهٔ استوار بپایهٔ طبقات می‌یابند که در آن کار و فعالیت طبقهٔ پائین ارزش عمده‌ای در حیات کلتوری صاحبان زمین دارد .

طبقهٔ پائین را به دو گروه ذیل می‌توان تقسیم کرد :

۱ــ پیشه وران دارای تخصص specialize . اینها بنام باری مسمی بوده شامل آهنگران ، چرمگران ، نجاران ، کنده‌کاران نقش روی چوب ، کوزه‌گران و بافندگان است.

۲ــ کارگران بدون تخصص unskilled workers که در وایگل Waigal بنام شیوله Šewla و در باشگل بنام لنه یا لونی Loni یا Lane یاد می‌شوند . اینها آن دسته‌ای از مردم‌اند که زمین و مواشی خود را از دست داده و موقف اجتماعی‌شان قوس نزولی را اختیار کرده و امروز مشغول کارهای مختلف حرفوی از قبیل بافندگی ، سبد بافی ، کوزه‌گری . . . اند که تولیدهاشان ظرافت و جنسیت عالی ساخت دسته گروه اولی یا پیشه‌وران دارای تخصص را ندارد . گروه دومی اکثر بصفت چوپان و کارگر روی مزرعه استخدام می‌شوند .

بعضا حقیقت امر بآن سادگی نیست که من در بالا رسم آنرا کردم. بعضی فرق ها و تفاوت های محلی نیز دیده می‌شود مثلا در درهٔ پرون که مرکز دینی کافرستان سابقه و نورستان امروزی است کارهای حرفوی توسط خود دهقانان اجرا می‌شود . در پَشکِی که پائین ترین قریه آن دره است جفتی از خانوادهٔ باری ساکن اند که کارشان آهنگری و ساختن آسیاب آبی است و بدین ترتیب رفع احتیاج مردم محل را می نمایند .

در درهٔ پرون یك نوع تقسیم کار و وظایف بین رشته ها و گروهها بملاحظه می‌رسد . مثلا اعضای گروه یا قبیلهٔ واچی Wači که از نظر مذهبی وابسته به دیسنی Disni و معتقد به خدای حاصل خیزی اند ، وظیفه نجاری را برعهده دارند . اهل حرفه و

و کسبه کاران نزد صاحبان زمین مردمان حقیر و پست بشمار می‌روند ۰

موجودیت باری ها ، شیوله ها و لونی ها در نورستان یك نعمت و عطیهٔ خداوندی برای صاحبان زمین بوده است۰ مگر این نعمت را کم کم دارند از دست می‌دهند از اینکه گروه‌های مذکور بتدریج دارند نورستان را ترك می‌گویند و صاحبان زمین و مالداران دیر یا زود از این نعمت گرانبها چشم باید بپوشند ۰ بدین ترتیب خطر آن می‌رود که کارهای حرفوی در آن منطقه از بین برود زیرا اربابان زمین نه تنها قامت خود را بکردن چنین کارها خم نمی کنند بلکه قادر باجرای آن نیز نیستند ۰

مساله موجودیت طبقات و موضوع موقف طبقاتی گروه‌های حرفوی و رنجبر را در جامعهٔ نورستان می‌توان از مثال ذیل بسادگی دریافت۰

اگر از ارباب و زمین دار نورستان پرسیده شود شما خود ادعا می کنید که مساوات از زمان‌های باستان در نورستان وجود داشته است پس نظرتان راجع به بارهای ولونی ها و۰۰۰ و موقف اجتماعی آنها چیست شخص پرسیده شده همان قیافه را به خود می‌گیرد که یك دهقان دنمارکی لحظه ، سوءال راجع به اهمیت و ارزش حیواناتش در تنظیم امور زراعتی به خود می‌گیرد ۰ خلاصه اینکه اهل حرفه در نورستان از داشتن حق مساوی با زمین دار محروم است۰

زمین دار نورستان مغرور خانهٔ خود و تزیینات آن بشمول علامات شاخص آن مثلاً شاخهای بزی و دیگر نشانه‌های ممیزه است (اشخاصی که درکشیدگی بین دو فامیل و یا دوقبیله باترتیب مهمانی و ضیافت وساطت می‌کنند سزاوار تزیین خانه اش با جفتی از شاخ بز می‌گردد) مگرکلمهٔی بحیث ستایش از اهل حرفه که آفرینندهٔ این خانه‌های زیباست به زبان نمی آورند ۰

در سال ۱۹۷۰ یك نمونه یا نسخهٔی از قسمت بالائی خانهٔ وایگلی در موزیم موس گورد Moesgaard در شهر آرهوس Aarhus در دنمارك توسط آقایان اگون هانسن و ویگو تامسن Egon Hansen. Viggo Thomsen ساخته شد که توسط آقای مرحوم عبدالله وکیل از کشته گروم Keshtagrom نورستان که از گروه باری است با قربانی گوسپندی در همان سال افتتاح گردید ۰

وکیل مرد جهان دیده‌ای بود ۰ قسمت بیشتر آسیای جنوبی را یعنی از بصره تا کلکته را دیده و تجارب وسیعی از این سفرها اندوخته بود ۰ این جهان دیدگی اندوخته و تجارب

وی از این سیاحت‌ها با وجود داشتن ریشهٔ باری او را نزد مردم نورستان ارجمند و با ارزش ساخته بود ۰

در زمان اقامت موصوف در دانمارک اینجانب جهات مختلف روابط اجتماعی و مسایل دگر نورستان را باوی طرح کردم۰ روزی در ضمن گفتگو از وکیل مرحوم پرسیدم چرا فرزندان (پسران) صاحبان زمین نورستان در کابل هموطنان حرفوی و کسبه کار نورستان خود را به نام یاد نکرده بایشان باری خطاب می‌کنند ۰ وکیل عبدالله جملهٔی بکار برد که بعد از بازگشت وی بافغانستان اکثراً راجع به جواب وی فکر می کردم۰ مرحوم گفت " بلی، وضع در نورستان تازمانی بهبود نمی‌یابد تاکه همه باری شویم۰"

اهل کسبه و حرفهٔ نورستان بمقایسه کسبه کاران دیگر قسمت‌های افغانستان در بعضی حرفه ها بیشتر مهارت دارند از این رو امکان میسر شدن کار برایشان در دیگر قسمتهای افغانستان موجود است و از طرف دیگر یکتعداد زیاد از فرزندان باری ها داخل ارتش و قوای هوائی شده‌اند ۰ اگر هم مهاجرت باری ها بدینموال در آینده ادامه پیدا کند نورستان تمام گروه های حرفوی خود را از دست خواهد داد و هیچکس نخواهد بود که کانال ها و جوی های آبیاری، پل‌ها، انبارها و خانه های زیبا و نشانهٔ عظمت و جلال اربابان زمین نورستان را بسازد ۰ آنگاه باید صاحبان زمین دورهٔ شاگردآموزی را نزد گروه های حرفوی سپری کنند که این امر برای اربابان زمین با درنظرگرفتن موقف و حیثیت اجتماعی صاحبان حرفه و مهاجرت روزافزون‌شان از منطقه برای تامین یك زندگی فامیلی و اجتماعی بهتر میسر نخواهد بود ۰

اگر هم بزودی قدمی در جهت بهتر ساختن شرایط اجتماعی و اقتصادی برای گروه‌های حرفوی برداشته نشود این مهارتهای باستانی که از نسلی به نسلی انتقال کرده از بین‌میرود و این بنوبهٔ خود یك فقر اقتصادی و فرهنگی را در نورستان ببار خواهد آورد ۰ باین معنی که قدرت انسانی بومی با دانش ذاتی شان دربارهٔ مالداری و کشت زمین های زراعتی باسیستم آبیاری مصنوعی در یك طبیعت کوهستانی و مشکلاتی‌که با آن مواجهند به کناری گذارده شده و ضرورت می‌افتد که نورستان از خارج اداره شود ۰ این امر بدون شك و تردید به طبیعت قبلاً صدمه دیدهٔ نورستان از اثر استفادهٔ وسیع و بدون اندیشهٔ چراگاهها و قطع و تخریب جنگل‌ها صدمهٔ بیشتری می‌زند ۰

اگر هم اربابان زمین در نورستان متوجه امر نشده و اسیر اقدامات سود جویانه، غیر محلی‌هائی شوند که به وضع منطقه آگاهی ندارند ، از نظر محیط زیست نورستان را دستخوش خطر ساخته و بدست خود مرغی راکه تخم طلا می نهد سر بریده و به عبارت دیگر گوشت یکروزه را فدای شیر همه‌روزه نموده‌اند . زیرا در افغانستان محصولات لبنیاتی و چوب ارزش طلا دارند بهمین جور انرژی که می‌توان از آب بدست آورد .

نورستان بنابر طبیعت کوهستانی اش و باران های شدید موسمی از نگاه اکولوژیك بسیار حساس است. این همان ریشه، شاخه و برگ درختان است که بدرجهٔ اول در نگاهداری طبقهٔ نازك و اندك خاکی در سطح کوه های سراشیب و تند کمك می کند . فلهذا تخریب بدون توجه و دقت جنگلات فاجعه‌ای را با خود همراه خواهد داشت. تخریب و قطع جنگلات تخریش زمین را از اثر سیلابها سبب میشود که این حادثه در حال حاضر در منطقه وایسگل قابل مشاهده است و این سبب از بین رفتن ثروت نورستان گردیده، استفاده و بهره‌برداری از قدرت آبی مشکل میگردد .

طوری که ذکر رفت مهاجرت کارگران حرفوی و افزارمندان ماهر که رکن عمدهٔ حیات فرهنگی و اقتصادی جامعهٔ نورستان می باشد عامل عمدهٔ این مشکلات است.

در نورستان سنگ نوشته هائی بملاحظه میرسد که از قرار اطلاعات از مردمان منطقه دست نوشتهٔ امرا Imra یا خالق کل است که تا امروز خواندن آن برای انسانها میسر نبوده است. بنا بر رابرت سن ۱۸۹۶ Robertson اگر هم امید این باشد که امرا یا خالق کل ـ طوری که در اساطیر ذکر رفته ـ دچار قهر و غضب نشده آفتاب و مهتاب را از آسمان نورستان دور نکرده و نورستان را بتاریکی غرق نسازد ، باید هم این نوشته ها خوانده شده و تفسیر گردد و از اوامر آن اطاعت گردد .

مقدمه

این رساله می بایست توسط یکنفر متخصص فن معماری نگاشته می‌شد ، در حالیکه من از نظر مسلك زیست شناس بوده و به صفت گیاه شناس در سیومین هیات اعزامی دولت دانمارك در آسیای مرکزی مسئولیت داشتم. سفر این هیات در سالهای ۴۹ـ۱۹۴۷ توسط آقای هنینگ هسلوند کریستن سن Haslund-Christensen پلانگذاری و رهبری گردید . شخصیت مزبور بتاریخ ۱۲ سپتمبر ۱۹۴۸ بکابل از جهان درگذشت و سرنوشت چنین شد که بنابر پیشنهاد وی و آقای هانس هنریك انگویست Hans Henrik Engqvistمواد رساله در دسترس من قرارداده شد تا تنظیم نموده و به نشربرسانم.

در سفر دوم من بسال ۱۹۵۳ به نورستان که آقای کلاوس فردیناند Klaus Ferdinand وآقای احمد علی معتمدی نیز همراه بودند ، بوضاحت دیده میشد که تعدادی از ساختمانهای نادر دلچسبی که در سفر اول درسال ۱۹۴۸ پابرجا بود ، صدمه دیده بودند و درسفرسیومی درسال ۱۹۶۴ یکتعداد بیشتر به خرابه ها مبدل گردیده بودند .

در بین سالهای ۷۰ـ۱۹۶۰ خطر دیگری نورستان را تهدید کرد که قسما خود را مسئول آن میدانم. موضوع و حقیقت از این قرارست که : من در سال ۱۹۵۰ مقاله‌ء راجع به پیاله‌های نقره‌ای نورستان نوشتم. نشر این مقاله نه تنها حلقه‌های بشرشناسی غربی را برای بدست آوردن نسخه و نمونه‌ء آن تحریك کرد بلکه افراد دگر بالخاصه سود جویان نیز متوجه موضوع گردیدند .

مقاله مشترك من و آقای توماس الود Thomas Alvad در سال ۱۹۵۳ درباره‌ء بربط نورستان و مقاله‌ء فوق الذکر اینجانب راجع به پیاله‌های نقره‌ای آنجا که محض جنبه‌ء تحقیقاتی علمی داشت و شرح حیات کلتوری گروه انسانی خارج از دسترس در بین دره‌های هندوکش بود ، جلب توجه گردآورنده‌های آثار عتیقه را کرد و در سال ۱۹۷۴ به اوج نهائی خود رسید . مثلاً جفتی از ستونهائی را که درسال ۱۹۴۸ توسط کنود پلودان Knud Paludan در نورستان عکسبرداری شده وتوسط نویسنده درسال ۱۹۶۱ در ضمن یك مقاله راجع به مجسمه‌های چوبی خداگان ونیاکان

آنجائی بچاپ رسیده بود ، درسال ۱۹۷٤ عین مجسمه از طرف سوداگران باستانی و عتیقه میوزیم های غربی بمعرض فروش گذاشته شد . اطلاعات بدست آمده ازطرف مقامات دولتی افغانستان حاکی است که آنها بقسم قاچاق به خارج برده شده است. عین ماجرا در قسمت پیاله های نقره‌ای نورستان که امروز ضم کلکسیون های شخصی در خارج افغانستان است اتفاق افتاده است.

نشرمقالات راجع به افغانستان بخاصه نورستان و گنجینه‌های گرانبهای عتیق آن ، سیاحان غربی را متوجه ساخت تامسافرت های خاصی از غرب به سوی افغانستان ترتیب داده که منظور از این مسافرتها بدست آوردن آثار عتیق از فامیل و خانواده‌های نورستان به قیمت های ناچیز و عرضه آن به بازارهای اروپائی به قیمت های گران بود .

امروز لوازم خانه و دیگر چیزهای نورستان در امریکا و دیگر ممالك غربی در دست اشخاص انفرادی قرار داشته درحالیکه موزیم کابل بنابر ناچیز بودن بود جه‌اش قادر به تهیه بیشتر از چند نمونه محدود نشده است.

یك نگاه سرسری کافیست که دریابیم با ادامهٔ این وضع بزودی سبب نابودی و از بین رفتن هویت اقلیت خاص و مشخص چون نورستان گردیده و علاوهٔ یك ضایعهٔ بزرگ کلتوری برای افغانستان خواهد بود .

اتفاق افتادن ماجرائی بالا که نزد من اهمیت خاص دارد باعث تشویشم گردیده و خاموش ماندن را برایم ناممکن ساخت. یکجا با مشاهدهٔ تاثیر مثبت نشرتهای پیشین بخاصه نشرتهای آقای احمد علی معتمدی و اینجانب در معرفت نورستان و نورستانی ها که قبلا جز لقب وحشی ، بدوی و حریص را نزد مردم نداشتند و امروز بصفت مردمان دارای کولتور غنی و بی‌نظیر تلقی میشوند ، انگیزه‌ای بود که اینجانب را واداشت در پی ترتیب و نشر این رساله شوم.

منظور و هدف اولی این رساله بمانند دیگران تقدیر و شناسائی فن معماری نورستان بوده و در عین زمان رجوع به مقامات مسئول افغانستان است که متوجه خطرگردیده و نگذارند که محصول ساخت دست پیشه‌وران ماهر و اهل حرفهٔ آن منطقهٔ افغانستان توسط اربابان زمین و دهقانان تخریب و نابود گردد .

علاوهٔ امید آن میرود که این رساله انگیزندهٔ علاقهٔ جدی و واقعی در قسمت فن معماری نورستان گردیده و زمینه محرك در راه بکار انداختن تحقیقات بیشتر و درست تری

درباره نورستان و کلتور آن شود و هم راه را در جهت محافظه آثار کلتوری نورستان طوریکه در کانفرانس ۱۹۷۰ منعقده درموزیم موس گورد Moesgaard دنمارک تحت عنوان کانفرانس کلتوری هند وکش Hindu-Kush Cultural Conference. پیشنهاد گردید باز کند ۰

از همه بیشتر مورد خرسندی و ممنونیت من خواهد شد اگر هم سبک قدیمی متروک نگردیده و بهمان سبک باستانی ادامه پیداکرده و منبع الهام در تعمیر ساختمانهای آینده در آن منطقه باشد ۰

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این موارد درباره ساختمانها و بنا های نورستان در سالهای ۴۹ـ۱۹۴۸ و ۵۴ـ۱۹۵۳ جمع آوری گردید و سپس در دانمارک توسط آقای انگکویست Engqvist در آکادمی هنرهای زیبای دنمارک تنظیم و ترتیب داده شد ۰ موصوف علاقه وافر وشدیدی درباره ساختمانهای نورستان داشته و اینجانب را بادامه تحقیقات درین زمینه در سالهای ۱۹۶۴ و ۱۹۷۰ تشویق و ترغیب کرد ۰

البته این تحقیقات بدون کمك و همکاری بی شایبه و خستگی ناپذیر رفقای نورستانی بر من ناممکن بود و من قادر بآن نخواهم بود که این همکاریها و تهیه معلومات وعلاوه بر آن مهمان نوازی های گرمشان را جبران کنم۰ بالاخص آقای عبدالرحیم از پشکی که که بنده را درجریان و نفوذ و اهمیت مذهب در حیات روزمره مردمان نورستان قرارداد و آقای عبدالله از کشته‌گروم که شخص سفرکرده بود و از اهمیت گنجینه‌های نفیس فرهنگی که که بارث گذاشته‌شده درك درستی داشت۰

سفر در منطقه نورستان ایجاب یك بنیه بدنی قوی را می‌کند ۰ در سالهای ۱۹۶۴ و ۱۹۷۰ تعدادی از کتل‌های بلند و صعب‌العبور گذر شد که بلندترین کتل ۴۴۰۰متر از سطح دریا ارتفاع داشت بعضا قریجات منطقه‌طوری موقعیت‌دارد که دسترسی بآنها مشکل است۰ درسال ۱۹۶۴ معمولا در یك گروه چهارنفری سفرمی‌کردیم۰ خانم مارگات Margot عهده‌دار دستگاه اخذ صوت بود ، وی و دخترم سوسنه در نقشه‌برداری و اندازه‌گیری بمن کمك می‌کردند ۰ درین سفر نیز آقای اکبر که از زمان سفرهای هاسلوند Haslund باماها همراه بود همراهی‌داشت و در ساعات خستگی ما را با بذله‌گوئیها

بادامهٔ سفر و کار تحقیقاتی تشویق می نمود و در وقت و زمان گرسنگی غذاهای ساده مگر لذیذ تهیه‌میکرد ۰

در سفر سال ۱۹۷۰ خانم مارگات و دختر مریم Miriam و آقای الف تیمرمن Ulf Timmermann بامن همراهی داشتند که اخیرالذکر بامن در اندازه گیری و فتوگرافی کمك می‌کرد ۰ آنها تمام تکالیف و مشکلات را تحمل کردند بقسم مثال شسته‌شدن خیمه و اردوگاه مابدریا در منطقه زونچیگال Zhönchigaدر اثر طوفان وباران ۰ (زونچیگال در وایگال نورستان است) ۰

هنگامی که در سالهای ۷۰ـ۱۹۶۹ همراه با اگون هانسن Egon Hansenیك نمونه از خانه‌های نورستان را در موزیم موس گورد Moesgaard در شهر ارهوس Aarhus بنامی‌کردیم علاقه و دلچسپی و بصیرتم در زمینهٔ عمارات و خانه‌های نورستانی زیادتر و زیادتر شد ۰ اگون هانسن در قسمت موزیم شخصی فوق العاده عملی و بارزش بوده و توانست یك نمونه از خانه‌های منطقه وایگل را با بکاربردن برخی از قسمتهای مهم ساختمان بنانماید ۰

بنده بالخاصه مرهون احسان آقای احمد علی معتمدی مدیر عمومی شعبهٔ آثار باستانی افغانستان می باشم که بایك رفاقت پایدار از زمان سفر ۱۹۵۳ به بعد همواره مشوق و راهنمای گرانقدری برای ما بود ۰ بعلاوه خود را مکلف میدانم که از آقایان جورج مرگنستیرنه Georg Morgenstierne و جورج بدروس Georg Buddruss و اسکایلرجونز Schuyler Jones و ولف گنگ لنتز Wolfgang Lentzو تورکیل فوندر Torkil Funder علمای عالی‌قدری که مواد به نشرنرسیده و بارزش خود را بدسترس بنده قراردادند اظهار امتنان کنم و علاوهٔ ساعات گرانبهای خود را وقف مذاکره و بحث دربارهٔ نورستان بامن کرده اند ۰ بالخاصه آقای اسکایلر جونز که بدون مذاکراتهای طولانی باوی دربارهٔ ساختمان اجتماعی و محیط اجتماعی نورستان، برداشت و تعبیر من از منطقه نورستان ناقص و ناممکن می بود ۰

دوستان و یاران نورستانی فراوان بمن کمك نموده اند که نام آنها جا بجا در متن کتاب آمده است اما لازم می‌دانم مخصوصا از دکتر احمد انا سید شمس الدین مجروح، احمد علی معتمدی، دکتر عبدالغفور فرهادی، عبدالوهاب طرزی، مترجمین محمد کریم نوشین و عزیز ککار و مخصوصا از بابامرد فراغی که مرا در اندازه‌گیری بناها یاری کرد و نیز از دولت افغانستان و موزه کابل سپاسگزاری نمایم۰

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In addition to my Nuristani friends I want to mention Hans Henrik Engqvist, Egon Hansen, and Viggo Thomsen.

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Finally, I want to thank the Jutland Archaeological Society for publishing of the manuscript.

Lennart Edelberg [1976]

2. Dates without brackets refer to field work in Nuristan carried out together with the person concerned. Dates in brackets refer to the person's own fieldwork in Nuristan. For detailed itineraries for Edelberg, Jones, Funder and those who accompanied them, vide Edelberg & Jones 1979.

Fig. 3: Map showing Nuristan in relation to the neighbouring countries. Drawn by Jørgen Skaarup†.

Introduction

According to Georg Morgenstierne Nuristan can be linguistically divided into the areas of *Kati* (including *Kam-viri*), *Prasun, Waigali,* and *Ashkun*.[3]

My investigations have been carried out within the corresponding valleys,[4] and are based on my fieldwork in 1948-49 as a member of The 3rd Danish Expedition to Central Asia and in 1953-54 as a member of The Henning Haslund-Christensen Memorial Expedition, and especially on my fieldwork in 1964 and 1970 (Danish Scientific Missions to Nuristan).

I have mainly worked in the six villages of the Parun Valley (*Prasun*), in the upper and lower Waigal (*Waigali*),[5] in the village of Wama (*Ashkun*), in the lower Bashgal, especially in the villages of Keshtagrom (Kushtoz) and Kamdesh (*East Kati*), and to a lesser degree in the village of Kantiwo (Ktiwi) (*West Kati*).

Thanks to Schuyler Jones' and Torkil Funder's material being put at my disposal, I can also give an impression of the architecture in the Titin area (*Ashkun*) and in the area of the upper Bashgal and Shkorigul (*East Kati*).

[L.E. 1976]

3. ... and perhaps *Dameli* (G. Morgenstierne 1974: p. 6).
4. I have never been in Damel and in the area of Ramgal (*West-Kati*). Wilfred Thesiger is likely to posses the best picture material of buildings from the Ramgal area (W. Thesiger 1957, and his private collection of photographs).
5. It should be noted, that the terms used by Western scholars for the different people and languages of Nuristan are not always the same as those used locally, e.g., the people in Waigal call themselves '*Kalasha*' and their own language '*Kalash-alā*' (Schuyler Jones 1974: p. 207 and personal information).

I: Nuristani buildings and builders

Preliminary observations on house types

Editor's note: L.E. left only a rough draft for this chapter, so the following is mainly compiled from Edelberg 1974 and Edelberg & Jones 1979.

Since 1948 I have collected material for a description of all types of Nuristani buildings, but to simplify maters, I will start by confining myself to the Nuristani house, showing what is typical in spite of many variations and suggesting the recognition of three main types: the PARUN house, the WAIGAL house and the BASHGAL house.

Editor's note: cf. Introduction and map. We are, to a certain degree, also able to compare these with examples from the Ashkun area, based on L.E.'s material from Wama and S.J.'s photographs and personal information from Nakara, Malil and Machwa.

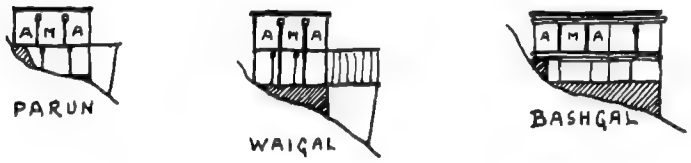


Fig. 4: L.E.'s sketch illustrating housetypes.

The typical house everywhere in Nuristan is two-storeyed. The upper floor is the main room (*āmā*), the roof of which is supported by four decorated cedar wood pillars around the fire place. In the centre of the roof over the hearth it is common to find a smoke hole. The entrance to the *āmā* from the verandah is ordinarily the only access to the interior of the house.

The lower floor, which serves as a store-room (*ateram-ganja*) is reached through an opening in the floor in a corner of the *āmā*. This hatchway is usually furnished with a trapdoor.

The basic units of measure in architecture have always principally been those of the human body, especially the hand and arm. Architecture in Nuristan is no exception. Said Ghulam, a carpenter of Keshtagrom, gave us the information in 1964 that the carpenter takes his measurements in ells (i.e., the distance from the elbow to the fingertips). In the Kati language this measure is called *düšt*, literally 'arm' (Konow 1911). The typical *āmā* should measure three bays square. One bay (Kt: *štümbələ*) corresponds to the distance spanned by the outstretched arms from fingertip to fingertip, i.e., a fathom. The four pillars around the hearth in the *āmā* should be set at a distance of one *štümbələ* from each other and, at the same time, each one should be one *štümbələ* from the nearest wall.

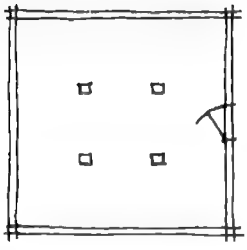


Fig. 5: Plan of a typical āmā.

Said Ghulam also said that the vertical distance from the ground of the lower storey to the roof of the *āmā* ought to be three *štümbələ*. Thus we see that the typical house without the addition of verandahs, store-rooms, or hay stores is cubical. In front of this cube two bays can be added, either as a verandah (which is on a level with the floor of the *āmā*), or as a store-room (Wg: *berim-ganja/-gai*), the roof of which then serves as a verandah.

If a roof is built over the verandah, it is supported by pillars or columns that are

set up at a distance of one *štümbələ* from the front wall of the *āmā* and at intervals of one bay or one *štümbələ* from each other.

For further information on the use of the *āmā*, for instance where the guests or inhabitants of the house are usually supposed to sit or stand, see Jones 1974, pp: 102-106.

The Parun Valley house

Fig. 209

Fig. 89

The Parun house presents the simplest type. In Pashki, Zumu, and Kushteki the houses are built on rather steep slopes so that all the rubbish and debris slides down the mountain, whereas in the villages of Dewa, Pronz, and Shtiwe, which are built out in the middle of the U-shaped valley, debris tends to accumulate in the narrow lanes between the houses. For this reason these last three villages sit in mounds and the lower rooms of many houses are actually underground (Edelberg 1972). As far as we know, the deserted village of Düröshwa in the Parun Valley above Shtiwe has never been visited nor studied by any scholar (Buddruss, personal communication). Whether it forms a mound or just consists of some open ruins is therefore not known. This may be an interesting site for archaeological investigation.

To reach the entrance of the *āmā* in Pashki one climbs the usual Nuristani ladder (a tree trunk with steps hewn out by an adze) from the ground to a kind of improvised verandah outside the upper floor. In Dewa, Pronz, and Shtiwe the houses are frequently three-storeyed because a kind of walled room has been arranged round a wooden louver over the smoke-hole. In such cases one enters the *āmā* from the original roof by climbing down an interior ladder.

Between the four supporting pillars and the roof of the *āmā* two heavy horizontal beams are inserted. In Parun and in Waigal these two beams run parallel to the entrance wall, and the pillars are elaborately carved, as they were also in Bashgal in the 1890's (Robertson, 1896: p. 486). The Parun *āmā* sometimes has additional pillars nearer the entrance wall. The beam which they support runs parallel to the two main beams.

The Waigal Valley house

In principle, Waigali houses are constructed in the same way as Paruni houses, except that the *āmā* in Waigal is always square and never has more than four pillars and, particularly important, these four pillars reach from the floor of the room below (*ateram-ganja*) to the ceiling of the room above, the *āmā*. Only the upper halves of these pillars, the part visible in the *āmā*, are carved with symbols of rank.

Thus the *ateram-ganja* has eight pillars, four which support the roof of the *ateram-ganja* (the floor of the *āmā* above) and four which are twice as long, passing up through the *āmā* to support the heavy beams that support the roof of the whole building.

Very often one finds houses with a rectangular verandah of the same breadth as the *āmā* outside the entrance. This projects a distance of two bays from the front wall; the outer edge of the verandah is supported on the cliff below by long poles. But here and there in the village of Wama in the Ashkun-speaking area (included here with the Waigal area for convenience) and nearly everywhere in the Waigal

Valley, this verandah forms the roof of a panelled hay store (*berim-ganja*) which is in front of the *ateram-ganja*. The lower edge of the hay store is then supported on the cliff by long poles. The usual entrance to the *berim-ganja* is from the *ateram-ganja*, but in the harvest season an opening in the panelled lateral wall of the *berim-ganja* may be arranged temporarily so that the women can bring hay directly into the store-room.

Fig. 12

At least one house in each village in the Waigal area has a roofed over and enclosed verandah outside the *āmā*. These special houses are called *kantar kōt*. The *kantar kōt* was in pre-Muslim times the house of the priest (*utā*). The roof of the verandah is supported by pillars that are elaborately carved and furthermore carry four-headed capitals in the shape of ram's heads with ammon-horns or similar designs.

The Lower Bashgal Valley house

Fig. 99 (colour)

The typical house of the lower Bashgal has an *āmā* with four octagonal wooden pillars (cf. Robertson, 1896: p. 486). The special feature of the Bashgal house is that the two beams supporting the roof run *at right angles* to the entrance wall and traverse the roofed verandah (at the same level as and parallel to the uppermost beams in the lateral walls). Here they are supported by a row of pillars, carved with very detailed patterns, and by the ornamented front structure of the house, the window-posts of which are slotted into a large, finely carved sill.

Editor's note: The enclosed verandah is a typical feature of Bashgal architecture. It is not to be confused with the *kantar kōt* of Waigal and Ashkun.

Apparently this feature is not very old, for Robertson describes the Bashgal house as follows (p. 486): "From the lateral walls of the apartment two large beams cross over, and are mainly supported on the top of the hearth pillars". If the lateral walls are those to the right and the left when you enter the *āmā*, which can hardly be doubted, the above description corresponds to the constructions we have met with in Parun and Waigal.

It is characteristic of house-building in the Bashgal area that two or more houses may be built together simultaneously, or successively, constituting a kind of "super-house", providing room for several households within the same family. (Moh. Afzal's house in Kamdesh consists of five such units). If the owner cannot afford to build the decorated verandah immediately, the house may stand unfinished, the beams of the roof projecting into the open air for years.

Various ways of constructing the different components of a building

Editor's note: This section, written mainly by the editor, is based on a selection of photographs found in L.E.'s material on Nuristan.

The wall

The walls of the lower store-room are nearly always built of stone. This work is not the responsibility of the *bari*, but is done by the owner himself.

Included in this stage of the building is the clearing and levelling of the site and any in-filling needed to make a satisfactory floor for the *ateram-ganja.*

The walls of the *āmā* are built of horizontal logs held in place by vertical poles on both sides of the wall (Wg: *pik'ū*), which are a little shorter than the distance from floor to ceiling in the *āmā*, and which pass through 3 or more wooden clamps (Wg: *nakur'ä*). These clamps have been inserted horizontally into the wall structure, so that their ends project out from either side of the wall. The vertical *pik'ū* are usually placed at a distance of one bay from each other and one bay from the house corner. The walls may consist entirely of horizontal wooden logs or timbers, but usually in place of every second log there is a layer of stones and mud. The typical walls of the *āmā* in the Bashgal Valley are built without the use of *pik'ū* and *nakur'ä*, although they are sometimes seen. The walls are today built exactly as they were in the time of Robertson: "It is usually well built, of cedar timber, and rubble stones embedded in mud mortar. The timbers, fashioned with the axe [read: adze] alone, and roughly morticed together at the angles of the building, form a series of wooden frames upon and between which the masonry is built" (Robertson, 1896: p. 484). See also Lentz, 1937: Abb. 113.

Fig. 6: Keshtagrom. The owner clearing the site and building the foundation. Photo: L.E., August 1964.

Fig. 7: Berimdesh, Waigal village. Construction of a double house. The basic construction shown here is typical of houses in the Waigal Valley. The baris *are building the* ateram-ganja, *and later they will build the* āmā *on top of this, and the verandah outside the* āmā. *Under the verandah (outside the door-opening seen in the picture), they will build a hay-store with panelled walls,* berim-ganja, *or leave the space open as a pathway or as a storage space for winter fuel. The lateral walls seen here are of stone. The others are the above described* pik'ū-nakur'ä *construction. The men are fitting a* nakur'ä *down over the two* pik'ū *by the door. They have spaced out the horizontal logs (*ban'ē*) by putting stones in between (see center of picture), and started to fill out these spaces with rubble (left side of picture). The timber resting on top of the stone wall (left side) has a hole in one end; this is for threading vine-rope through, when bringing it down from the mountain. In the room to the right, one can glimpse a notched tree trunk: a ladder. The woman is carrying clay in her basket, to be used for tamping firmly down as the top layer of a roof or a floor. Women fetching clay and others who help the owner (clearing the site and building the foundations), are fed by the owner. Photo: S.J. 1967.*

3 Nuristani Buildings

Fig. 8: Keshtagrom. In the foreground the foundation of a new dwelling has been built. To the left of this is another incomplete building: presumably a berim-gai, *the roof of which is going to be a verandah, and behind this, the walls of an* amō, *built as described by Robertson. The walls of the buildings to the right are not typical of the district for each horizontal layer consists of two logs. They are also slightly notched at the corners. The rubble fillings are rendered with mud, but not so the timber,* makř'ik, *which gives the*

*Fig. 9: The panelled haystore (*berim-ganja*) under the verandah, described in "The Waigal House", is not always as elegantly carved as this one from Zhönchigal. The V-shaped designs represent the heads and horns of goats and indicate that the owner of the house is a notable feast-giver. The panels are vertical boards let into grooves in the sill and head. Photo: L. E. 1964.*

Fig. 10: Wama. As we move towards the Ashkun area, the walls get slightly less sophisticated. The architecture of Wama is more similar to that of Waigal valley (and Nisheigram) than to that of Parun. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 11: Wama, J̌oma's house: the corner. This solution to the construction of corners, a development of the pik'ū *technique, is seen in the Ashkun (and Nisheigram) and occaisionally in the other valleys. Photo: L.E. 1948. Fig. 13 from Machwa, West Nuristan, also shows this technique. Editor's note: cf. L.E.'s remarks in the Prologue about the Nuristani buildings withstanding frequent earthquakes: as an architect I find the lack of rigidity (e.g. crossbracing) remarkable. It is perhaps features such as these corners, and the walls constructed with the use of* pik'ū-nakur'ā *that enable the buildings to "give" a little during tremors and to settle down afterwards, not much the worse for wear.*

Fig. 12: Nisheigram. A good example of how the villagers have adapted their housing to the steep mountain-sides. Less steep countryside can be used as terraced fields; thus no arable land goes to waste. The square roofs of the āmās *and the verandahs outside the* āmās *are the only flat outdoor spaces for working, dancing and drying food crops on. The walls of the* āmās *are constructed with the* pik'ū-nakur'ä *method. The panelled walls enclose store-rooms* (berim-ganja) *underneath the verandahs. Note also in the middle of the* āmā *roofs: a flat stone or a board covers the smoke-hole. Photo: S.J. Feb. 1967.*

Fig. 13: Machwa, Ashkun region. A house under construction, seen from the side. In the upper storey, the āmā, *the infilling of stones between the horizontal timbers has not been completed (e.g., on the left-hand side of picture, cf. Edelberg & Jones, 1979 picture 93, showing the builder at work inside the* āmā *of the same house). The interior walls will be rendered with clay, but the exterior will be left as shown. The corners of this building are not quite as neat as that shown in fig. 11, but the principle is the same. Photo: S.J. Dec. 1960.*

Fig. 14: Malil, Ashkun region. In the Ashkun area it is common to find that the front wall of the hearth-room, the āmā, *is of wooden panels, sometimes, as here, carved. These are also seen on the previous picture from Machwa and on fig. 17 from Wama. Note the corner to the right: a* pik'ū-nakur'ā *construction. To the left of the entrance door a wicker halfdoor leans against the wall. The branches the man has brought home are evergreen oak: fodder for the*

Fig. 15: Pashki. The walls of most buildings in the lower Parun area, as shown here, are mostly of wood and appear rather crude and untidy. cf. Prologue, with reference to the lack of baris *in Parun. Photo: L.E. 1964. (See Robertson: p. 488-491).*

Fig. 16: Pronz. The further up the valley one goes, the less wood is available and the buildings tend to eventually be made mostly of stone (see Robertson: p. 488). Photo: L.E. 1948. cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, pictures 129 & 131 from Pronz, 123 from Shtiwe, and 133 from Dewa.

The door

The door (*dô*) used when entering a Nuristani dwelling is usually flanked by two wooden panels (*dôpača*) and is very often elaborately carved with symbols of rank. It usually consists of a full-sized door, opening inwards, "hinged" on the left side, (as seen from the verandah), and a half-door opening outwards and "hinged" on the right side. The hinges are pivots made to rotate in sockets in the sill and lintel (see further explanation in chapters describing houses), except for the top hinge of the half-door, which is just a leather strap. The half-door is useful during winter time, letting light in and smoke out, and preventing draughts at floor level. See also back and front cover pages; the customary way of locking doors is described for the house from Keshtagrom.

Fig. 17: An entrance door from Wama. Note the wild markhor horns, a sign that the house-owner is a succesful hunter. The original keyhole is to be seen below the newer padlock. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 18: Chimi, Waigal Valley. Door with stylized heads and horns of the mythologically important mountain goat, a shape the creator god Imra (or Mara) sometimes takes. The large round designs represent major feasts of merit given by the original owner of the house. Photo: T.F. Nov. 1970.

The "window"

Windows as such are not included in the traditional buildings of Nuristan. There are, however, often small openings, giving light and air to the *berim-ganja*. These can be clearly seen from the outside on pictures from the villages in Lower Bashgal, for instance fig. 102.

Fig. 19: Wama. A food safe built into the wall. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 21: (opposite) Keshtagrom. A tiny window in a lateral (or back) wall. The width of the room behind the wall is 3 štümbələ. *as shown by the ends of the roof beams; the ends of the timbers in the partitioning wall are visible in the facade (to the right). Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 20: Ameshdesh, Waigal Valley. A small aperture, seen from the inside, admits light on to the work table supporting two rotary querns. Photo: S.J. 1969.

The pillar

"Unfinished house belonging to a craftsman.... The four pillars of the hearth-room – the *āmā* – are placed with the carved fronts towards the entrance. Previously, carved pillars were inconceivable [in a *bari*'s house]. Traditionally, craftsmen have no right to decorate their houses with carved symbols of rank.... The beams, which rest on the four pillars, run parallel to the front of the house. The roof joists, which rest upon the beams, should number approx. ten, so this stage is not yet finished." See picture 44, opposite p. 62 in Edelberg & Jones 1979.

Fig. 22: Zhönchigal. Photo: K.F. 1953.

Further information from S.J.: *Uluma* (low status landowner) could have only the *uträkuna* shelf. If the owner of the house was of higher rank, a broad plank (approx. 45-50 cm) could be mounted horizontally below this, decorated with symbols representing the ranks he had achieved. Those who had a still higher rank could have a vertical plank, from the center of the shelf to the floor of the *āmā*, likewise carved with status symbols.

Fig. 23: Wama. An example of some very finely carved pillars (üštum), *these two are toward the back of the room. The back wall of the* āmā *is seen between them. To the right the roof-bearing beam (Wg.:* S.J.: wřš, L.E.: wrəš) *can also be seen, running parallel to this wall. Between the hearth pillars and this beam an "extra" little beam* (maček) *is inserted. The "drying poles"* (dümdana) *in this picture, placed at right angles to the beams, have nothing to do with the construction of the roof. A pair of* maček *are recorded in the house from Zhönchigal, otherwise they are seldom visible on photographs from houses, due to lack of light and to too much soot. Photo: L.E. 1948.*

Fig. 24: Zhönchigal. A shelf (uträkuna) *across the back wall, supported by carved planks, one horizontal and one vertical. Note: grapes on the floor and a basket for carrying grapes hanging above them. The room must have been rendered recently (with clay). Photo: L.E. 1953.*

The roof

On top of the beams come the joists, and on top of these comes the first continuous layer of roofing material: great rough-hewn slabs of wood. Thereupon lie layers of chips, shavings or dried leaves, pulverized stone, and clay.

Fig. 25: Keshtagrom. A house under construction. Being from the lower Bashgal Valley, these beams (B.: uglə, wugřə*) are at right angles to the front wall of the house. Across these lie the joists,* (ăstrə̄-garə), *then wooden slabs* (bitala), *a layer of chippings, a layer of pulverized stone* (pal'ol) *and finally a thick layer of well trampled down clay* (mūk). *These flat roofs are obviously not ideal for draining off rain water or melting snow, but they are often the only level outdoor working spaces in the village and are much used as such. Photo: L.E. 1964. cf. pictures 51 and 139 in Edelberg & Jones, 1979.*

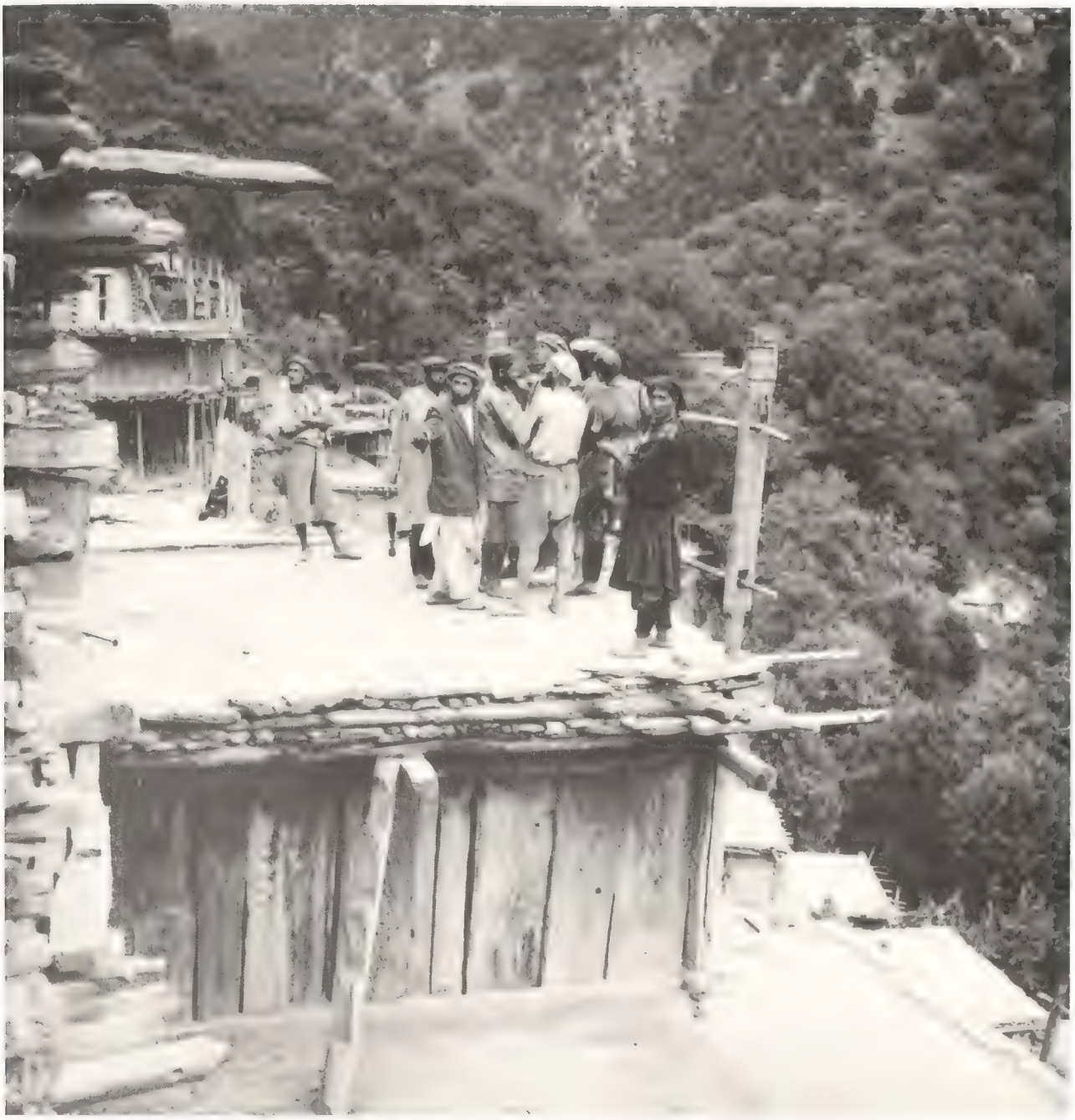


Fig. 26: Zhönchigal. The house of Mulla Aziz (next to the recorded house). Note the wooden drain trough for leading water off the roof just under the feet of Mulla Aziz's wife at 45° to the rest of the construction. Sometimes these gutters are very long, in an endeavour to lead rain water away from other, lower-lying roofs. This picture also shows a panelled haystore, a ladder (notched tree trunk) and several verandahs bordered by railings. The edge of the roof is finished here partly with logs. On pictures 9, 10 and 17 a solution using mainly stone can be seen, while picture 20 shows the method typical of lower Bashgal: a fascia board, held in place by pegs through the beam-ends. Photo: L.E. 1964.

The smoke hole

This description of a smoke hole from the Bashgal Valley is quoted from Robertson, 1896: p. 487: "The smoke-hole is over the middle of the hearth. It is usually a foot square, and has enclosing boards which project a few inches above the level of the roof. It is closed by a flat board with a long handle in the middle being placed over it. The long handle hangs down into the room, whence it can be pushed up and the smoke-hole opened."

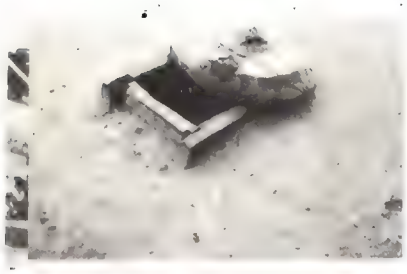


Fig. 27: Keshtagrom. A smoke hole seen from the outside. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 28. Zhönchigal. A 'lantern' type smoke hole. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 29: A roof in Shtiwe. The smoke hole has a wicker "chimney". Photo: K.F. 1953.

Fig. 30: A "chimney" on top of a house in Pronz. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 31: A chimney, or louver, on a house in Pashki. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 32: A good picture illustrating several features already mentioned: the wall (a lateral one) constructed with the use of pik`ũ-nakur`à, *a built-in food safe, the roof beams protruding a little from the wall, and the roof construction. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

The unsolved problem

Quote from Edelberg, 1974:

A solution, which may justly be called constructive, has been found to nearly all the architectural problems of Nuristani houses, except for that of the access to the entrance. This access is usually clumsy and quite haphazardly built, probably because of the need to be able to remove it in a hurry if an enemy is approaching. In other words, the Nuristani *bari* have neither invented nor imported the idea of the drawbridge. If a Nuristani ever saw a drawbridge, I think he would clap his hands and exclaim: "That's the thing we have always needed!"

Fig. 33: Kegal, Waigal Valley. The access to the verandah is remarkably primitive and surely not characteristic of bari *craftmanship. To slip round the corner of the* āmā*, from one roof to another or from the cliff and over to the verandah, you have to tread a little diagonal bridge. Seen from above ...*

Fig. 34: ... and seen from below. Photos: S.J. 1969.

The cost of building

Personal information from S.J., given to him by Mohd. Amin of Zhönchigal (in 1969).

An *āmā* would cost as follows:

Fig. 36 The trees are cut and the timber shaped in the mountains. This costs about 10 goats.

3 *sers* of roghan (clarified butter) and 12 *sers* of grain are needed to feed those who bring the wood down from the mountains.

The cost of the actual construction:

4 walls	4 goats
1 *dô* & 2 *dôpača,* (door with panels)	1 goat
4 *üštüm,* (pillars)	1 goat
(2 goats if carved)	
2 *wřš* & 2 *maček,* (beams and 'extra' beams)	1 goat
12 *daliJam,* (joists)	2 goats
bitala for the roof, (wooden slabs)	1 goat
18 *pik'ū* & 24 *nakur'ä*	1 goat

This is the cost of an *āmā;* an entire house would cost 6 cows.

The carpenter's tools

In 1896, when writing about the craftsmen of the Bashgal Valley, G. S. Robertson made the following comments: "The Káfir slaves, if we consider the indifferent tools at their disposal, are extremely clever at carpentry" (Robertson, 1896: p. 484f). Later, in describing the great temple at Kushteki in the Parun valley he wrote: "The whole temple must have occupied a great deal of time and labour for the Presuns to complete, so simple are they and so rude are their tools" (Robertson, 1896: p. 392).

I have occasionally claimed to have been the main field collector of Nuristani ethnographical objects for the National Museum and Moesgaard Museum in Denmark. I am therefore rather hesitant to admit that I neglected to obtain tools. The reason for this is, however, easily explained: in buying an artisan's tools, you prevent him from working for some time. Here is a list of the carpenter's most important tools, according to Said Ghulam from Keshtagrom.

1 Axe, long handled.
2 Adze a) long handled with broad cutting edge.
3 b) short handled with broad cutting edge.
4 c) short handled with narrow cutting edge.
5 Knife, made from the tang on the proximal end of a file.
6 Chisel.
7 Whetstone.

Fig. 35 8 Handsaw.

(Ordinary sheath knife, not shown in photograph).

When considering this list of carpenter's tools, I must confess that I was more concerned with the results of craftmanship, the buildings of Nuristan, than with the tools and the procedures that produced them. Maybe future research can make good this gap in my studies. I can merely give the following information:

1) The axe is used for ringing and felling trees, usually cedar (*Cedrus deodara*). The ringing is thought to increase the relative quantity of resin in the timber.

Fig. 38

2) The long handled adze is used when squaring tree trunks for timber (the broad axe is not known in Nuristan).

3) The short handled adze with a broad cutting-edge is used, for instance, when levelling the surface of doors or panels. The curvature of the adze head from the butt to the edge, is greater than the curvature of the circle described when swinging the adze. The last part of the stroke is therefore apt to flake a chip off, giving the finished surface a very lively texture.

cf. front and back covers, and Edelberg & Jones 1979: fig. 22

4) The short handled adze with a narrow cutting edge is presumably used for making grooves and notches, but I have never seen it in use.

Fig. 39

5) This knife, fashioned from a file, seems particularly effective for decorative carving.

6) The chisel is probably used by the carpenter when preparing a joint. I have, however, never seen it in use.

7) Whetstones are of course indispensable. Strangely enough, the rotating grindstone is not known, though the rotating millstone is widely found in Nuristan. All tools are kept amazingly sharp.

8) I have never seen the handsaw being used, nor have I ever seen a piece of sawn timber in use. It was therefore a big surprise to find a saw amongst Said Ghulam's tools. I don't know whether he can sharpen and set the saw.

Editor's note: This information is from 1964. In L.E.'s diary from 1.2.1949 he writes of Abdulla of Keshtagrom: "We also went to his houses lower down in the village and saw the smithy, the weaving- and carpenter-workshops.... There was a compass saw here (the only saw I've seen in N.) and a T-square".

Fig. 35: The carpenter's tools described in the text. To give some idea of the size of these tools, a long handled axe in Moesgaard Museum, (inventory no. EA 99B-78), similar to the one in this picture, has been measured: the shaft is 85 cm (33½ ins.) long and 2,3 cm (1 in.) in diameter. According to this scale, the shaft of the shorter adzes would be approx. 32 cm. (12½ ins.) long. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 36: A piece of timber being brought down the mountain. It has already been roughly shaped with an adze. To facilitate transportation a hole to pass an osier or entwined vines through has been cut in one end. The end surface of the timber has been shaped with an axe, not a saw. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 37: A carpenter cutting a piece of timber with an axe. Photo: T.E. 1970.

Fig. 38: Kamdesh. Timber for house-building being squared. The logs were roughly hewn before being brought down from the mountains, and a twisted vine used for manoeuvering the logs is seen passed through a hole in the log lying behind the bari *to the left. cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, picture 91. Photo: K.F. 1953.*

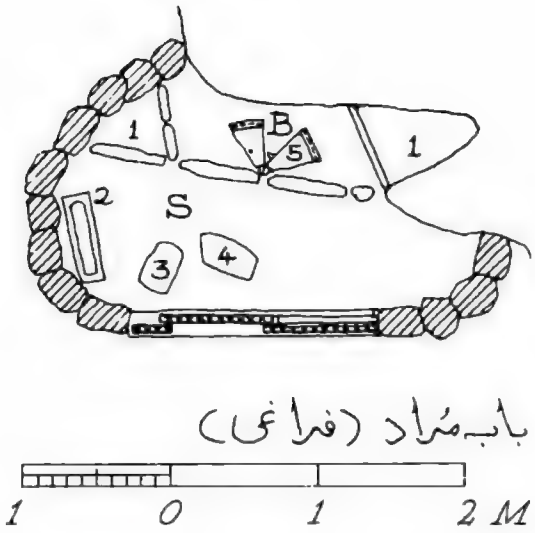
Fig. 39: Kamdesh. A bari *carving timber to be used in a house. cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, pictures 103 and 95. Photo: K.F. 1953.*

The above mentioned are tools used for building. I do not recollect having seen any others, apart from a float used for smoothing mud on walls. Perhaps such work is done by the owner of the house, not by the *bari*. The carpenter does have some other tools at his disposal, e.g. the turning lathe, the pump drill, and special cutters for hollowing out bowls or for shaping rifle butts, but these are not used for building houses.

Fig. 40: Zhönchigal. A turning lathe constructed with the help of an extra pillar erected next to one of the hearth pillars. Previously one would not have found a decorated hearth pillar in a bari*'s house, as the carvings represent symbols of rank and prestige, which only a landowner, an* atrožan*, was allowed to use. The craftsman is making a* kavor*, a wooden bowl used for making bread dough. Photo: L.E. 1954.*

Fig. 41: Zhönchigal. A pump drill in use. cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, figure 38. Photo: K.F. 1953.

Editor's note: In the above, an attempt has been made to give an account of the carpenter's tools. They are fashioned by a blacksmith; the carpenter is in many villages also the blacksmith.



1. Rooms for charcoal
2. Wooden vessel for cooling-water
3. Anvil
4. Whet-stone
5. Bellows
B. The boy's place
S. The smith's place

Fig. 42: A smithy in Pashki (belonging to Gul Mohammad?). Measured by L.E. in May 1948. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 43: The blacksmith Gul Mohammad in front of his smithy in Pashki. Because of the special equipment needed, and the processes required to repair tools, the smithy is usually housed in a separate building. Photo: L.E. May 1948.

Fig. 44: Keshtagrom. A blacksmith at work in the smithy under Abdullah's house in the bari *quarters of the village. The man to the right is operating the bellows. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

II: Nuristani dwellings

The Waigali-speaking region

An unfinished house in Muldesh[6]

*Fig. 45: A part of Muldesh village, seen from the south. Terraced fields and deciduous fruit trees are seen to the right. Below and above the village is a belt of original evergreen oak forest (*Quercus balout*) and, at the very top of the picture, one can see the lower fringe of the coniferous forest. Photo: T.F. November, 1970.*

On the 12th of July, 1964 I surveyed and measured a house in Muldesh, belonging to Ghulam Haidar. This was the very first dwelling I recorded on the Danish Scientific Mission of 1964, after having been encouraged by the architect Hans H. Engqvist to investigate the architecture of Nuristan.

In Muldesh I had requested permission to measure 'some house or other', and Ghulam Haidar – approximately 65 years old – had put his house at my disposal. Surrounding his fireplace were four pillars, less elaborately carved than some which I had seen around fireplaces in other houses – but nevertheless, I thought, a house is a house. The fact that this house had three storeys, whereas so many other dwellings only had two, could hardly render it less suitable for surveying.

However, when I had nearly finished my measuring, Ghulam Haidar said: "But my house is unfinished". 'Now what is this?' I thought in dismay. Ethnographic

6. In the following I use the present tense about the building itself, whereas household effects, which could have been moved next time one saw them, are described in the past tense.
When the terms 'to the left' or 'to the right' are applied, they are reckoned as seen from the outside, looking at the front wall of the house.

work in Nuristan is always somewhat hectic, as one never knows for how long the owner can stand having one messing about in his house, or whether he will permit one access to the room behind this door or that hatch. And is there time left to finish before dark? Has anything been overlooked? And all the time one is under intense and inquisitive observation. "Is your house unfinished?", I exclaimed. "Yes, but I hope to be able to make it complete very soon" – "But what is missing then?" – "A room on top – an *aš'ēpur*" he answered. He alluded to what is most commonly called an *āmā,* a hearth room.

At that moment I realized – what now seems self-evident to me – that when a man starts building a house in Nuristan he has an ultimate goal in view. Only with an *āmā* is a house finally complete. Ghulam Haidar's house had no *āmā.* I was due to leave Muldesh soon after, and thus it was only in the next village, Zhönchigal, that I succeeded in making a full survey of a complete house – and then the complete house in Zhönchigal proved to have been reconstructed! Which gave rise to new and different problems.

Fig. 46 (colour)

Ghulam Haidar was a fairly old man at the time. In 1970 he was dead. At that time his house was not yet completed with an *āmā.* His case illustrates how life is lived and how a household will function – even in an incomplete house.

Ghulam Haidar's house was entered by means of a log ladder, *cir̆,* roughly hewn out of a single piece of timber. This ladder led from the roof of the neighbouring house up to a door in the right side of the *berim-ganja* (marked b on drawing), and from this room a centrally placed door in the back wall (the front wall of the *ateram-ganja*) led into the *ateram-ganja* (marked B on the drawing).

In the *ateram-ganja,* on the right hand side just inside the entrance door, a trap-door, *wās,* is situated, through which it is possible to squeeze down into the room (c on the drawing) under the *berim-ganja.* In the right side of this lower room there is a square opening in the floor, leading to yet another room (d_1) by means of another log ladder. This is the lowest storey and a wall (parallel to the lateral walls) divides it into two rooms, one of which is closed (d_1) and the other half-open (d_2).

The house is built on the steeply sloping rock, which gradually protrudes further into the lower storeys.

Fig. 47: Ghulam Haidar outside his house. Photo: L.E. July, 1964.

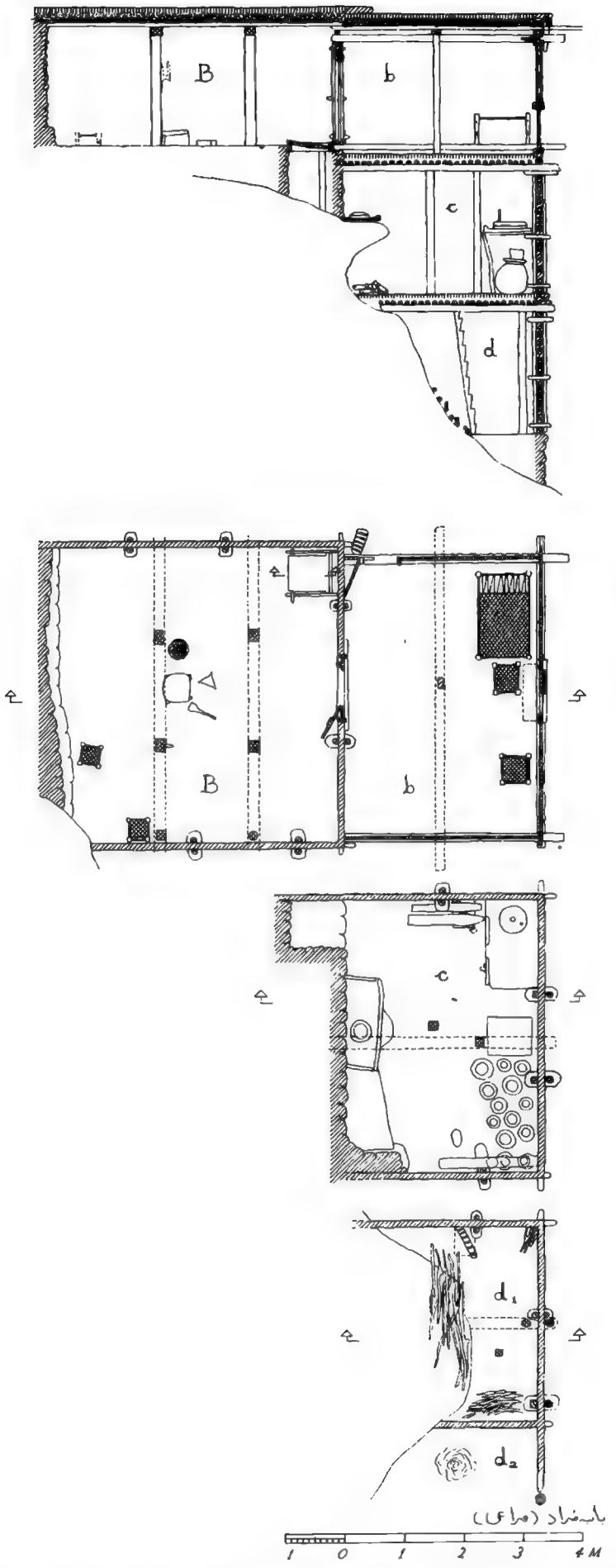


Fig. 48: Drawing of Ghulam Haidar's house. Measured by L.E. on the 12th of July, 1964. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

As mentioned above the house of Ghulam Haidar was incomplete – the *āmā* was lacking.

Fig. 50 & 51

The *ateram-ganja* (B) was his kitchen and his winter residence – it functioned as a hearth room. On the mud floor between four square-cut, undecorated pillars, the fireplace was situated, and an iron tripod was placed here.

Behind the fireplace three stone slabs set on edge make a receptacle for ashes and hot embers. The hindmost transverse slab is the largest, the lateral ones being somewhat shorter. These three stones are topped by a fourth – a flat slab on which kitchen utensils and pine torches may be placed.

In the photo an iron spatula for handling hot embers and a round pestle-stone are seen. In front of the fireplace and conveniently turned towards it, the firewood was stacked and beside the fireplace there was a wooden spade for removing ashes. Beside the ash compartment there was an hourglass-shaped basket work table for flat-baked bread etc.

On the left side of the *ateram-ganja* two extra uprights immediately against the wall support respectively the nearest and the furthest roof-beam.

Fig. 48

In the right-hand corner of the room, a trap-door is set within a wooden frame in the floor. The trapdoor itself is a square wooden slab, cut with projections which revolve in notches in the frame, so that when opened, it rests against the entrance wall. The frame is constructed out of four boards which are halved together in the corners, so as to make their upper edges flush with each other, slightly raised above the floor. The trap-door is opened by grasping the front edge, which is rabbeted to a smaller dimension to make the trap-door partly fit into and partly rest upon the rim of the frame. Such trap-doors are usually placed in the near lefthand corner – that is, when an *āmā* is concerned (cf. Jones 1974: pp. 103-104). Here, however, it is situated in an *ateram-ganja,* which is only temporarily used as living quarters, pending the final completion of the house.

Editor's note: Likewise, this could account for there being no smoke hole and for the pillars not being decorated with carvings.

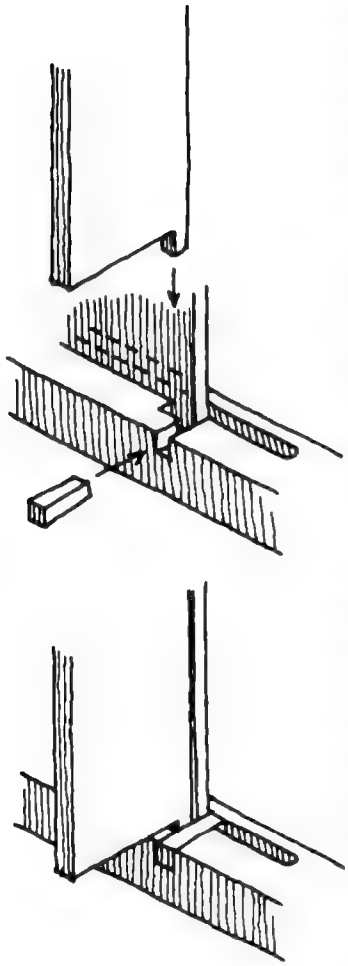


Fig. 49: A sketch by L.E. showing how the lower 'hinge' of a door is inserted into the threshold.

The outer side of the door between the *ateram-ganja* (B) and the *berim-ganja* (b) is decorated with a simple relief carving representing something that looks like the contour of a boat with a cuf-off stern, seen from above with the stem pointing downwards. Most likely this relief symbolizes the horned ram's head in an extremely conventionalized form.

The *berim-ganja* (b) is not quite as broad as the *ateram-ganja,* and its depth allows for only one roof beam between the front and the back wall. This beam is parallel to the beams of the *ateram-ganja* and is supported only by a single undecorated pillar, which is placed centrally, straight in front of the door. The frontal and lateral outer walls, *pača,* are constructed of vertically-set slabs of wood, the edges of which have been roughly hewn parallel. The upper and lower edges of these panels fit into grooves in the sill and head. The head of the front wall rests upon the corresponding heads of the lateral walls, whereas the sills of the lateral walls rest upon the sill of the front wall.

The door, *dōr,* in the right lateral wall has been made from a single piece of timber. Instead of hinges, it has pivots fitted into sockets in the head and sill. It was brought into position by placing the upper pivot in the corresponding socket, and sliding the lower one through a transverse notch into the groove running lengthwise in the sill. Once in position the pivot is 'locked' there by a conical piece of wood, which is hammered firmly into place across the groove. This groove in

Fig. 50: The hearth in Ghulam Haidar's ateram-ganja. *In the background the trapdoor leading downstairs can be seen, and also a* pik-ü-nakur-ä *construction in the wall. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 51: The same hearth as in the previous picture, seen from the back of the room looking towards the entrance door. Photo: L.E. 1964.

the sill continues some way past the edge of the panel that functions as a door-jamb, out onto the threshold on the side where the door is hung. Most likely this is only incidental.

In the middle of the front wall of the *berim-ganja* an opening, *de'rik,* overlooking the valley has been constructed. This opening can be closed with a sliding shutter. The construction is as shown in figure 53.

Fig. 52: The berim-ganja *in front of the* ateram-ganja. *If the house was complete and an* ama *had been built on top of the* ateram-ganja, *the* berim-ganja *would be a haystore. As it is now, it must serve as entrance and verandah. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

The sill of the opening is placed about two feet above the floor. Its ends are deeply notched, so as to embrace the full-length wooden panels rising on both sides of the opening. This sill is grooved on its under side, and into this groove fit a pair of shorter wooden slabs, flush with all the other panels of the front wall.

The upper side of the window sill and the under side of the lintel are grooved all the way from one notched end to another. In these grooves the shutter can slide to and fro. This shutter is only half as broad as the opening, but in another pair of grooves – an upper and a lower – running parallel to the grooves for the shutter, but outside them, and for only half the distance of the opening, is a permanently fixed panel of the same size as the shutter. This latter panel is thus a slightly raised part of the front wall, while the sliding shutter is flush with the wall on both sides. When the opening is free, the shutter is hidden behind the fixed wooden slab, and it is closed by pushing the shutter to from the inside.

The function of the lintel is not quite clear to me. The grooves in its under side might as well have been cut into the long head timber. Possibly its notched ends serve to prevent the wooden panels on either side of the opening from sliding out of position in their top grooves. The lintel also supports a shelf which is wedged in underneath the head, but this can hardly be the main purpose of the lintel.

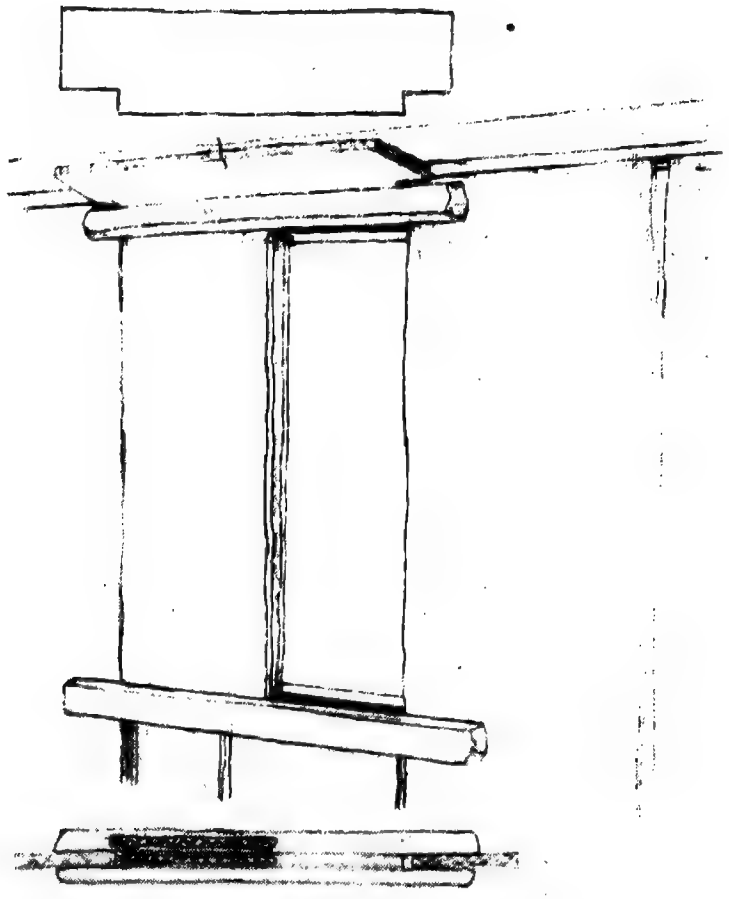


Fig. 53: Sketch of the sliding panel in the front wall of Ghulam Haidar's house in Muldesh. Drawn by L.E.

Fig. 48

Under the *berim-ganja* there is a room (c) with two pillars, one of which supports a roof beam running at right angles to the roof beams in rooms B and b, i.e. parallel to the side walls. I omitted to investigate the function of the second pillar. At right angles to the roof beam and the heads on the two lateral walls, a number of medium sized round poles are placed to help take the weight of the floor above.

Fig. 54

The rock juts out from the back wall and in the far left corner it supports two overlapping shelves. On the floor under the rock projection of the back wall there were four chair-legs, and under the projection in the corner there was some firewood.

Fig. 55

In the front right hand corner a table with a rotary handquern is attached to the wall. The room is therefore called *düšö-ganja*, quern room. The surface of the table is adzed out, leaving a raised rim, which has in places been cut away, making it easier to sweep flour off the table.

Up against the middle of the front wall stood a square wooden chest, nearly as tall as a man – presumably for grain storage.

Under the quern-table there were a couple of earthenware jars with lids of stone or wood. On the other side of the chest were thirteen earthenware jars with stone lids.

In the middle of the floor near the left lateral wall there is a small hole through which the inhabitants, by squatting, can relieve themselves, the excrement accumulating in the half-open room below (d_2).

The square hole in the floor alongside the right lateral wall – the only means of access to the room below (d_1) – is covered by a couple of roughly hewn boards.

Fig. 54: Room c, taken from the entrance. In the foreground the shelf is seen, and behind it are earthenware storage jars with stone lids. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 55: The table supporting a handquern in room c. The big chest is also seen behind the pillar to the right. Photo: L.E. 1964.

In the room d_1 there are no permanent fixtures whatever. It is simply called *ganja*. The ceiling is supported by one beam which – as was the case in room c – lies at right angles to the beams in room B and b. This beam rests upon a pillar on the inside of the front wall. Another pillar outside the wall also provides support for this beam, but this pillar has probably been added at some later date and was therefore not part of the original construction.

In room d_1 there were small piles of firewood, and in the right corner there was a traction fork made from a branch, a flail, a pestle, etc. and, of course, the notched log ladder which gave access to the room.

Fig. 56: The room d_1 is used for storage. In the corner stands a traction fork (for tilling, cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, picture 15), and a flail (for threshing, cf. ibid. pictures 69 and 132) Photo: L.E. 1964.

Finally, I wonder: in which order were the rooms B-d constructed?

Fig. 57: Muldesh, Waigal Valley. A 'double' house, the further one complete and the nearer one lacking the ama. *As in Ghulam Haidar's house, the walls are constructed with* pik'ū *and* nakur'ä, *and the wall-timbers lap over each other at the corners. The roof beams lie parallel to the front wall. The roof construction can be seen plainly in the foreground: wooden slabs have been placed on top of the rafters, followed by wood chippings or dried leaves, then pulverized stone, and finally clay. Photo: S.J. August, 1969.*

A completed house from Zhönchigal

Fig. 58: Zhönchigal, the Waigali-speaking area. A good general view of the village. The walls of the berim-ganja *in the foreground are constructed with* pik'ū-nakur'ä *and have a slightly rougher appearance than the* ama *walls above them, whilst some of the other* berim-ganja *have panelled walls. Most of the* ama *walls seem to be rendered with clay or white-washed. Photo: S.J. July, 1970.*

On the 14th of July, 1964 I started measuring the house of mulla Abdul Aziz, which is situated in that part of Zhönchigal inhabited by the Let-dari (i.e. a descent group. Cf. Edelberg 1965: p. 168 for map of village). Abdul Aziz was then about 30 years old. His father was called Omar Jan, and his father's father Cö'ral, which sounds pre-Islamic.

Abdul Aziz appeared to have two wives and also to own the house to the left of the one surveyed. To enter either of these houses, one had to cross over the verandah of the house described.

The surveying took me a few days, as I couldn't stay in Abdul Aziz' house all the time, and it was during one of the breaks in my work that I had occasion to make an important discovery:

The eaves of the roofs are usually built from planks or poles laid on the projecting roof joists, and interspersed with or superseded by layers of neatly arranged flat slate stones. The roof edges on a couple of nearby houses were, however,

Fig. 59: A hearth pillar being reused to strengthen the edge of a roof in Zhönchigal. Photo: L.E. 1964.

strengthened with big pieces of timber, which, on closer inspection, turned out to be reused pieces; in fact hearth pillars. But the remarkable thing about them was that they were nearly twice as long as pillars usually are in an *āmā*, and that half their length was without carvings and more slender. The explanation is quite simply that when completeing a house by building an *āmā*, it is not just built on top of the *ateram-ganja;* the *bari* makes four holes in the roof of the *ateram-ganja* and lowers the undecorated part of the new hearth pillars down into the room below, to come to rest directly on the rock or some other stable foundation. The pillar shown came from a demolished house.

Editor's note: The fact that the pillars of the *āmâ* go through the *ateram-ganja* and down to the rock bed may enable the house to better withstand earthquakes.

So it was understandable that in the *ateram-ganja* of Abdul Aziz' house I found more than the four hearth pillars I had seen in Ghulam Haidar's house in Muldesh. My reader may expect that there would be eight pillars; nevertheless, there were only seven. Six of these stood in pairs, while the seventh stood alone. This latter pillar and one from each of the pairs, supported the *ateram-ganja*'s roof beams, whilst the other three went straight through the floor between the *ateram-ganja* and the *āmā*. But why were there only three of these? When I asked Abdul Aziz about this, he explained that the house had been rebuilt, and that on that occasion, the bottom-(*ateram-ganja*-) half had been cut off the left foremost pillar in the *āmā*. But not only that – Abdul Aziz maintained that the four pillars had at that time also been moved round clockwise. I think, however, that the front, righthand pillar had been changed over with the back, lefthand one.

Fig. 61

To reach Abdul Aziz' house, one had to go from the roof of a neighbouring house, via a diagonally placed plank, *šin*, leading to the roof of his *berim ganja* (or

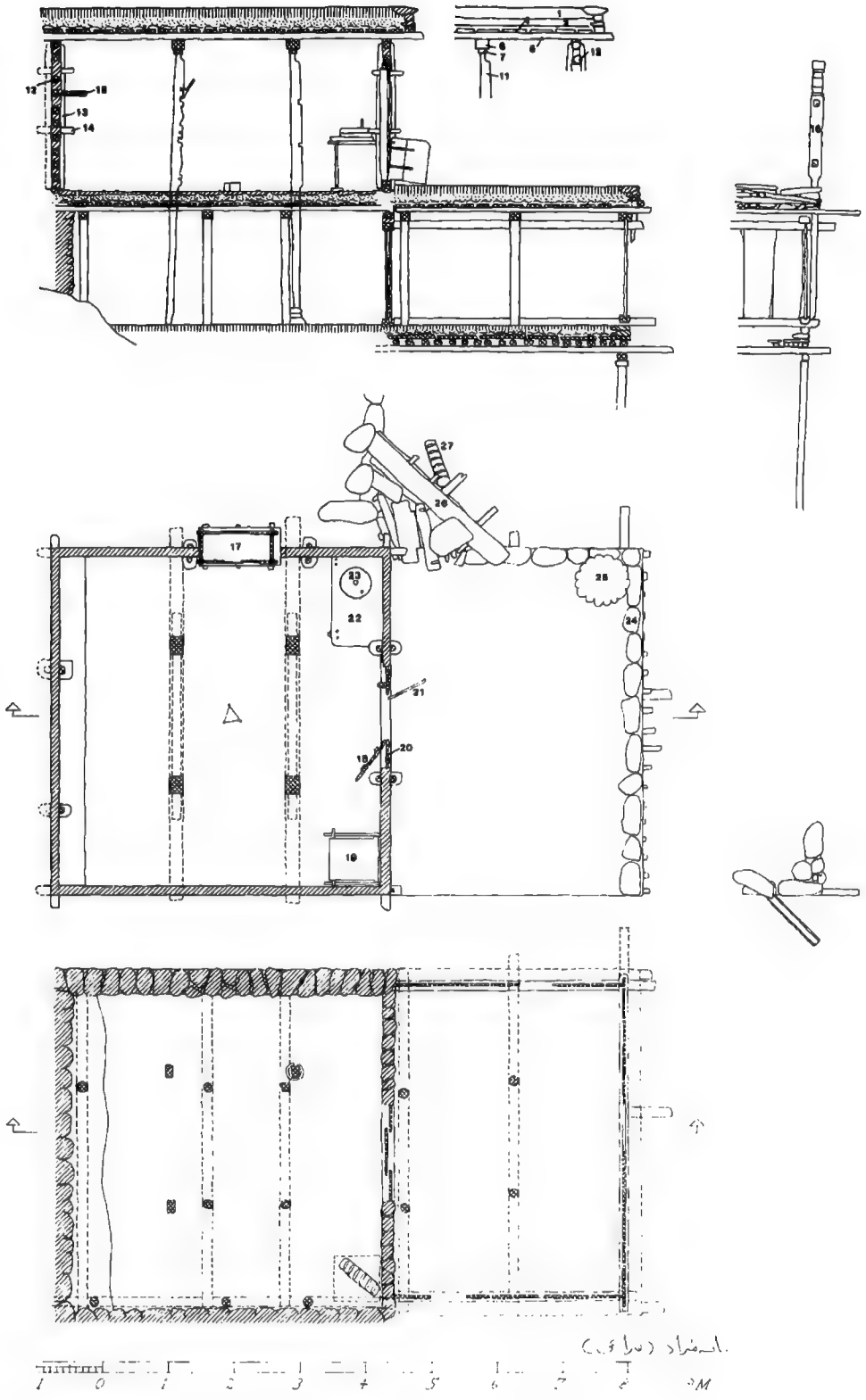
berim-gai). This arrangement is what I called the Nuristani carpenter's "unsolved problem". (cf. fig. 33 & 34). In this case, there were several pieces of wood being reused here. There was also a ladder, *čō̄*, placed on another neighbour's lower-lying roof and leaning against the *šin*.

From the roof of the *berim-ganja*, which served as a verandah, one could enter the *āmā* (marked A on the drawings) through the doorway, *dâə*, placed in the middle of the front wall. A trap-door, *wās*, in the front lefthand corner of the *āmā*, opened onto a ladder leading down to the *ateram-ganja* (B), and from here one could go through a doorway out into the *berim-ganja* (b). The open space underneath the *berim-ganja*, called *ma'köu* (c) was demarcated by three long supporting poles and was only accessible from outside.

Fig. 68

Abdul Aziz' house was complete, having been finished by the construction of the *āmā*. There were no possibilities for further extensions.

Fig. 60: the access to Abdul Aziz's house. There is a larder or food safe in the lateral wall, and a neat little garden on the roof/verandah. Photo: L.E. July 1964.



1 muk
2 palal
4 bitäla
5 dalijam/žam
6 wrāš
7 mačäk/maček
11 üštum/ustū(n)
12 ban'e
13 pik'ū
14 nakur'ä
15 uträkuna
16 kardamō
17 düri
18 dâ/dâə/dô/dôr
19 dū/wẫs
20 dâpača
21 dâkuna
22 döšpatä
23 döšei
24 kārəka
25 tōlik
26 šin
27 čō

Fig. 61: Abdul Aziz's house. Measured by L.E. 14-15 July, 1964. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

I did not notice anything unusual about the *āmā*. But on an interior photograph of the lateral lefthand wall, I can see indications which lead me to suspect that it might have been a wainscoted wall – maybe that is why I haven't recorded any *pik'ū-nakur'ä* in this wall. Anyway, this wall was plastered with clay, as were all the other walls of the *āmā*. The four hearth pillars *ustū(n)* have carved decorations on the frontal surfaces (i.e., as seen from the doorway), and some of them also on the lateral surfaces. In the Waigal area it is usually the frontal- and hearth-sides that are decorated, but here, in Abdul Aziz' *āmā*, the hearth-side carvings were lacking on the left, hindmost and right, foremost pillars, which is why I believe, as stated earlier on, that it is specifically these two columns that were interchanged.

The right, hindmost pillar had carvings on the hearth-side.

The left, nearest pillar had carvings on the hearth-side, representing a head with horns, and above this two four-legged animals, their bodies decorated with small circles, and with their legs upwards. At first, I thought the pillar had been placed upside down, but this didn't fit in with the horns of the figure below. The explanation is that we have here two dead, spotted leopards. A leopard-hunter is very highly esteemed in the stock-owning communities of Nuristan, (Cf. Jones 1974: p. 203).

Both the back pillars had a carved hook tied onto their frontal sides. The hook

Fig. 62: The back, lefthand pillar. Abdul Aziz' had hung his rifle and umbrella on a carved wooden hook tied to the hearth-pillar. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 63: The front, lefthand pillar in Abdul Aziz' ama *seen from the side. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

was made from a forked oak (*Quercus balout*) branch. Abdul Aziz' house did lack a characteristic feature, viz. drying-poles over the hearth, (cf. fig. 22). It also lacked a smoke hole.

The front pair and the back pair of pillars each support a short extra beam, *mačäk,* (to be seen on the drawings but not on any of the photographs), rather resembling a capital, underneath the main beam, *wrəš.*

Such *mačäk* usually have carved, stylized animal heads at either end. I failed to note whether they were to be found on Abdul Aziz' *mačäk;* one easily overlooks them, due to soot from the fireplace.

The two roof beams of the *āmā* which rest on the *mačäk* and thereby also on the front and back pair of columns, are supported by, and project a little further than the lateral walls. Across these beams lie about 14 broad, sturdy planks, *dalijām* or *žām,* running from the back wall to the front wall of the *āmā,* their slightly rounded ends protruding from these walls, so as to form eaves.

Fig. 60

cf. Fig. 66

On many houses the edges of the roofs or eaves are stabilized by big pegs stuck vertically through holes in the ends of these planks or beams, so helping to keep in place the poles and slates that terminate the roof-edge. I did not note such pegs on Abdul Aziz' house, and many houses are in fact built without them.

Editor's note: Photo 68 shows that the house to the left of the one surveyed does have these pegs on the roof of its *āmā.*

Transversing the approx. 14 planks (actually roof joists) comes a layer of wooden slabs, *bitäla,* that cover the roof tolerably well. On top of this comes the usual layer of oak leaves, twigs and chippings that get left over when preparing the timber for the house. Then comes a layer of pulverized stone, *palal,* which is a by-product from the preparation of the building-site. Finally the roof is finished off with a layer of stamped-down clay, *muk,* reaching right out to the slate-stone edge. In the middle of this the smoke hole is to be seen – if there is one; this house did not have one.

Fig. 64

In the front, right hand corner of the *āmā* a rotary hand quern, *döšei,* was placed on a table, *döšpatä,* that was supported partly by the wall and partly by two cross-pieces, which lay in the forked ends of two supports – virtually the front legs of the table.

Fig. 60 & 65

There is a cupboard (or food safe), *düri,* built into the right lateral wall, and protruding from it both outwards and inwards. The cupboard has a little sliding door in the side facing into the *āmā;* it slides horizontally in a groove. The whole cupboard is fitted in between two horizontal logs, *ban'ē,* in the wall itself, and therefore was presumably built at the same time as the *āmā.* The vertical sides are fitted into grooves in the top and bottom of the cupboard. The long sides of the cupboard are tenoned into the short sides: a tenon passes through the short wall at either end and is kept in place by a dowling peg, so holding all four walls together. All in all, quite a stable construction.

The ends of the *nakur'ä,* jutting into the rooms are often used as smaller shelves, but a large main shelf, *uträkuna*, stretches across the whole of the back wall 4 or 5 feet above the floor (ca. 1.40 m). In Abdul Aziz' *āmā* the *uträkuna* was not supported in the middle, as is otherwise usually the case. All sorts of household utensils were placed on it such as wooden bowls, mortars, tripod tables, etc. – as far as I can remember, the Koran was lying on it too, over to the right. A metal chest and a sewing machine stood on the floor beneath this shelf.

Fig. 62

There were two beds: one was placed in the right side of the room, *möli-tā,* and

Fig. 64: The front legs of the quern table are forked in their topmost ends, and the tips of these forks pass through corresponding holes in the tabletop, so stabilizing the table. Photo: L.E. July 1964.

Fig. 65: The wife of Abdul Aziz, in front of the built-in cupboard. Photo: L.E. July 1964.

the other in the left side, *kauṛi-tā*. The trapdoor, *dũ* or *wās*, leading to the *ateram-ganja* is in the lefthand corner, up against the front wall.

As far as the floor is concerned, I had the impression it was of flat stones embedded in clay, in which case it was an exception to the rule – most floors are just clay, *muk*.

The door, *då̃/dōr,* opening onto the verandah, i.e., the roof of the *berim-ganja,* is flanked each side by two panels, *dåpača,* which are decorated with carvings called *kirau ṣiŋ,* that is: horns (*ṣiŋ*) with the same shape as the two-pronged traction-fork (*kirau*) used by two women when cultivating the fields. *Kirau ṣiŋ* are goat horns that sweep straight back from the head. (Cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979: picture 15).

Fig. 61, plan

On the right side of the door a jamb has been let into the threshold and lintel. The left side of the door itself is also "let into" the threshold and lintel; there are no hinges, but small projections from the upper and lower edges of the door revolve in corresponding sockets in the threshold, *d'arə*, and lintel, *dåə'šē*.

The half-door, *dåkuna,* is made of two pieces of wood, not so thick as the door

Fig. 66: Zhönchigal, Waigal Valley. A house under construction, showing a doorway and the front of an ama. *The wooden plank leaning in the doorway is used as a substitute for a prayer carpet; a practice that the orthodox Sunni Muslims find shocking. The two upright poles in the doorway are temporary supports which will be removed later. Photo: L.E. July 1964.*

Fig. 67: Zhönchigal. An ama *with verandah covered with the fruit* onab (Zizyphus) *spread out on goat-hair rugs to dry. The door and doorpanels are decorated with abstract carvings of goats heads and horns (*kirau siŋ*). On the right is a door frame. Access to house verandahs may be prevented by constructing such doors. This picture is not from the house described. Photo: L.E. 1953.*

itself, and put together by two dovetailings, *anikič*. At the top it is attached to the righthand panel by a leather strap, and at the bottom it has a pivot that revolves in a socket, similar to the big door. It can only be opened outwards.

Fig. 60

The verandah is bordered by stones called *kārəka*. In the right-hand corner some stones encircle a little bed, *tōlik*, presumably of a plant-culture one wished to propagate.[7]

The *ateram-ganja* (B) has, as mentioned earlier, seven pillars around the middle of the room, three pillars along the left wall and one against the back wall. These pillars just inside the walls, and the beams they support, could be to take the increased weight on the roof caused by building the *āmā*.

Four of the seven pillars centered around the middle of the room support two beams that are placed closer to each other than the corresponding beams in the *āmā*. The other three pillars are, as already mentioned, the bottom halves of the hearth pillars from the room above. Three flat stones are inserted between the nearest, right hand pillar and the floor of the *ateram-ganja*.[8]

The ceiling in the *ateram-ganja* consists of long poles – not of boards as in the *āmā* – on top of which comes the usual layer of broad wood slabs.

All the walls are built of stone. There is a door, *gai-dor*, flanked by wooden panels in the middle of the front wall; the door was locked – presumably because the *berim-ganja* was easily accessible from the outside.

There was some firewood stored in the *ateram-ganja*, and between the back wall and the pillars, there were some big clay pots for storing grain. There was a big chest between the right-hand wall and the pillars.

There are two pairs of pillars in the *berim-ganja* (b): one pair up against the wall of the *ateram-ganja*, and the other pair at a distance of 1 bay, *štümbələ*, from these. In both pairs the pillars were 1 *štümbələ* apart.

If the *ateram-ganja* and the *berim-ganja* were not built simultaneously, one can understand the advantage of placing an extra set of roof-bearing pillars close to the wall between these two rooms. If the rafters of the *berim-ganja* were to have been inserted into (and so rest upon) this wall, it would have meant rebuilding some of the wall and roof-edge. As the construction stands now, the rafters do in fact rest on this roof beam instead of on the wall.

Fig. 61, section

The *berim-ganja* has an opening in each of the three panelled walls. These are not constructed as doors; a panel has just been lifted out of position (I noticed that in the front wall the grooves in the head and sill continued through the gap in the wall). So the room is well ventilated – it is used for hay-storage.

The joists, just round poles, that carry the floor of this room, are at right-angles to those in the rest of the building, as are the corresponding roof beams. These three roof beams rest on the bed-rock at the back of the house and on a head-timber under the front wall of the *berim-ganja*, which in turn is supported by three long poles. These rest on firm bed-rock and are about 5 m long.

7. Robertson 1896 does, however, write on page 466: "Another curious duty undertaken by the Kaneash is to grow a miniature field of wheat in the living room of the house..."
8. I did not think to survey the level of the floor – maybe *if* this pillar has been changed over with the left, back one, the length of this pillar might have fitted better to the back of the room. I was not able to find or to be given a reason for the building alterations. But it would seem reasonable to suppose that future investigations of such alterations and repairs, combined with investigations into the circumstances of inheritance and the precedence of rank and status achievements, together might throw more light upon the social relationships in Nuristan in general.

This sheltered area under *berim-ganja* is called *ma'köu,* and in it there are several different kinds of small, rough sheds, not structually connected with the house itself in any way. They are more or less completely closed in by stone walls, in which the doorways may be closed by screens made of twigs twisted or woven together.

Fig. 68: Mulla Abdul Aziz' two houses. The house surveyed is to the right of the one with railings on the verandah. Note how also the verandah railing-posts continue down to the floor of the berim-ganja. *The tops of these posts are embellished with symbols of rank; the owner of a house is not permitted to raise such a railing before he has attained a certain status in the village. Photo: L.E. July, 1964. Cf. fig. 26 in chapter I.*

Fig. 69: Also from Zhönchigal: a triple house, from just below the village. These three houses are not typical of the area, because an extra room has been built beneath each of the berim-ganja. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

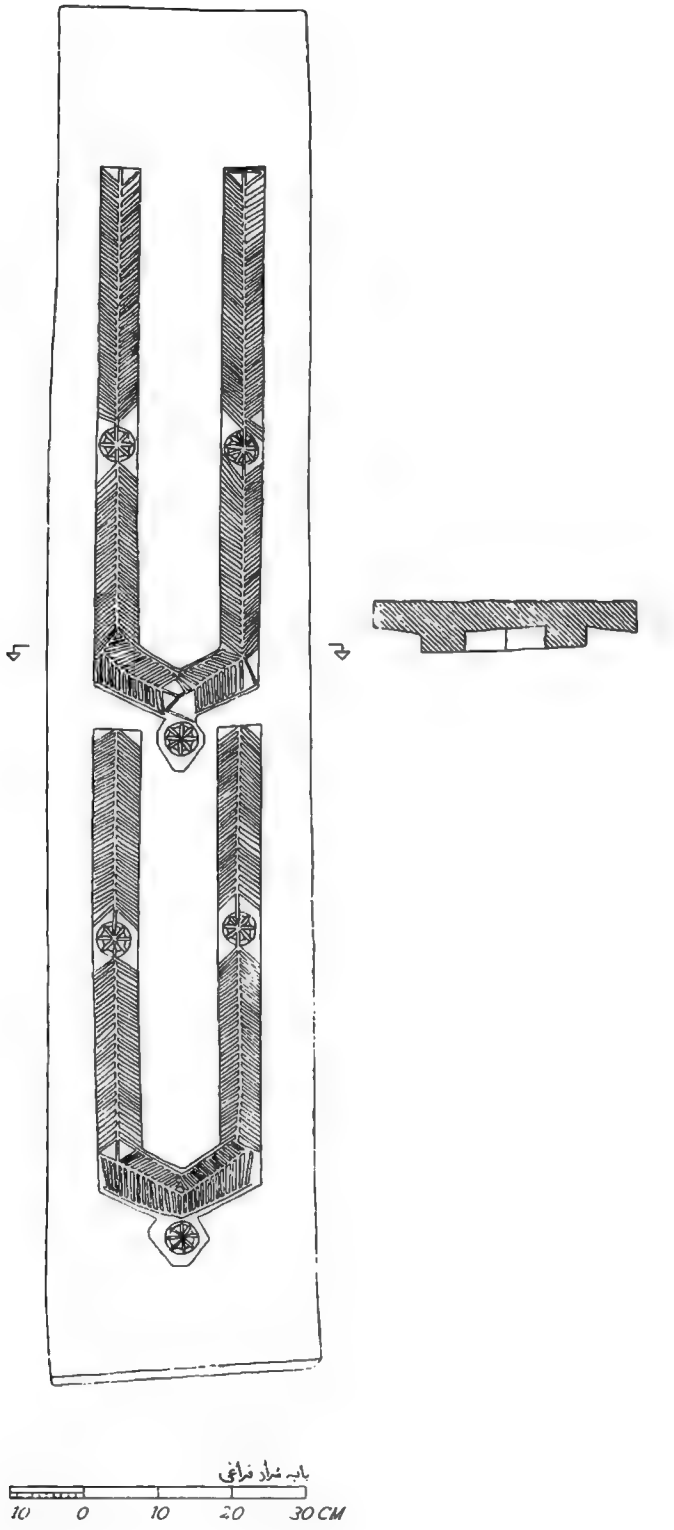


Fig. 70: A panel from a hayloft in Zhönchigal. Measured by L.E. in July, 1964. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Wama: J̌oma's house

By the editor

Fig. 71: Wama village in the Ashkun region. Here there are no berim-ganja *under the verandahs, as the village is built on an exceedingly steep slope, 300 m above the Pech River, and the livestock are stabled below the village. Typical for the Ashkun area, many of the* amas *have panelled front walls. Photo: L.E. 1948.*

In April 1948 Lennart Edelberg surveyed Mulla J̌oma's house and later Babamorad Feraghi made working drawings of the house from those measurements, but at the time of his death, L.E. had not written out a description of the house.

Among the measurements and rough drawings for this house L.E. has noted in his diary:

In the cellar:

1. Cupboard for grapes and pomegranates, with lock.
2. Wooden chest for storing maize.
3. Jars, piled on top of each other, wheat, barley.
4. Wicker stands for bread.

The panelled front wall, typical of Wama, is seen in the drawing and photograph. There is no explanation of how one gets to the front door, (usually with the help of a notched log ladder).

Judging from the finely carved pillars, the photo is most likely from the *āmā*.

The *mačäk*, a short beam across the two hearth pillars, directly beneath and supporting the roof beams, is not used here. There are, however, two other pieces of wood inserted between the pillars, supporting some drying poles. These are seen on the drawing. (Cf. working drawing of the house in Zhönchigal, which has the *mačäk* but not the drying poles).

At the left end of the shelf along the back of the room, some bows are hung up on a forked branch, apparently stuck into the shelf (vaguely seen in the picture). To the right another arrangement for hanging possessions is seen (on drawing): a pole, presumably suspended from between the beams.

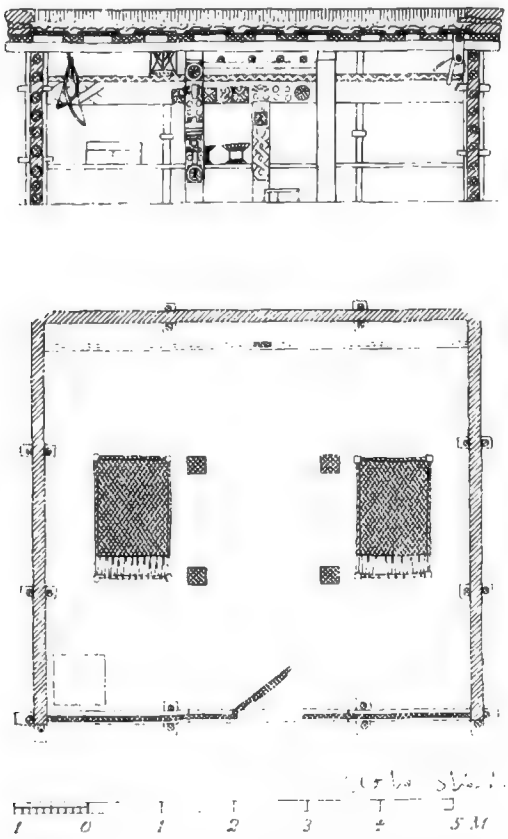


Fig. 72: Mulla J̌oma's house, Wama. Measured by L.E. in April, 1948. Drawing by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 73: Ǐoma's house. The front wall of the ama. *Photo: L.E. April, 1948.*

Fig. 74: The hindmost pillar to the left. On the back wall two shelves are seen, and supporting these, a vertical board. On the lower shelf are two wicker stands for serving bread on. A griddle for making bread leans against the shelf. Photo: L.E. April, 1948.

Editor's note: There are no drawings or measurements of "the cellar". The survey is, as far as I can judge from L.E.'s notebooks, the very first building L.E. recorded in detail from Nuristan. So his interest in the architecture of Nuristan seems to have been awoken by this fine example here – an interest, which eventually led to this book. Taking into consideration that L.E. was a biologist, and at the time working as a botanist, it is quite remarkable that he made these observations.

Hearth pillars from the Wama-Waigal area

Fig. 59

On the 14th of July, 1964, while I was surveying the house in Zhönchigal, I found three hearth pillars being reused for reinforcing roof edges. I measured two of them.

One was 3.30 m long; the top, decorated part was 1.95 long.

The other one was 3.90 m and the top decorated part was 2.05 m.

I doubt whether they come from the same house, as the carved decorations are different, but the fact that they were found near each other does imply that all three might somehow belong together. One explanation could be that a *mačäk* has been inserted between one of the pillars and the ceiling. The difference in the total length could be explained by the shortest pillar being the hindmost and coming to rest on the floor of an *ateram-ganja* where the rock bed gradually sloped downwards.

In April 1948 I found a discarded hearth pillar in Wama. Its lower half (the *ateram-ganja* part) was missing, though I didn't realize this at the time. I bought it for the National Museum in Copenhagen, and it is at present to be found as the back, right-hand pillar in a reconstruction of a Waigal-Wama-*āmā* at the Moes-

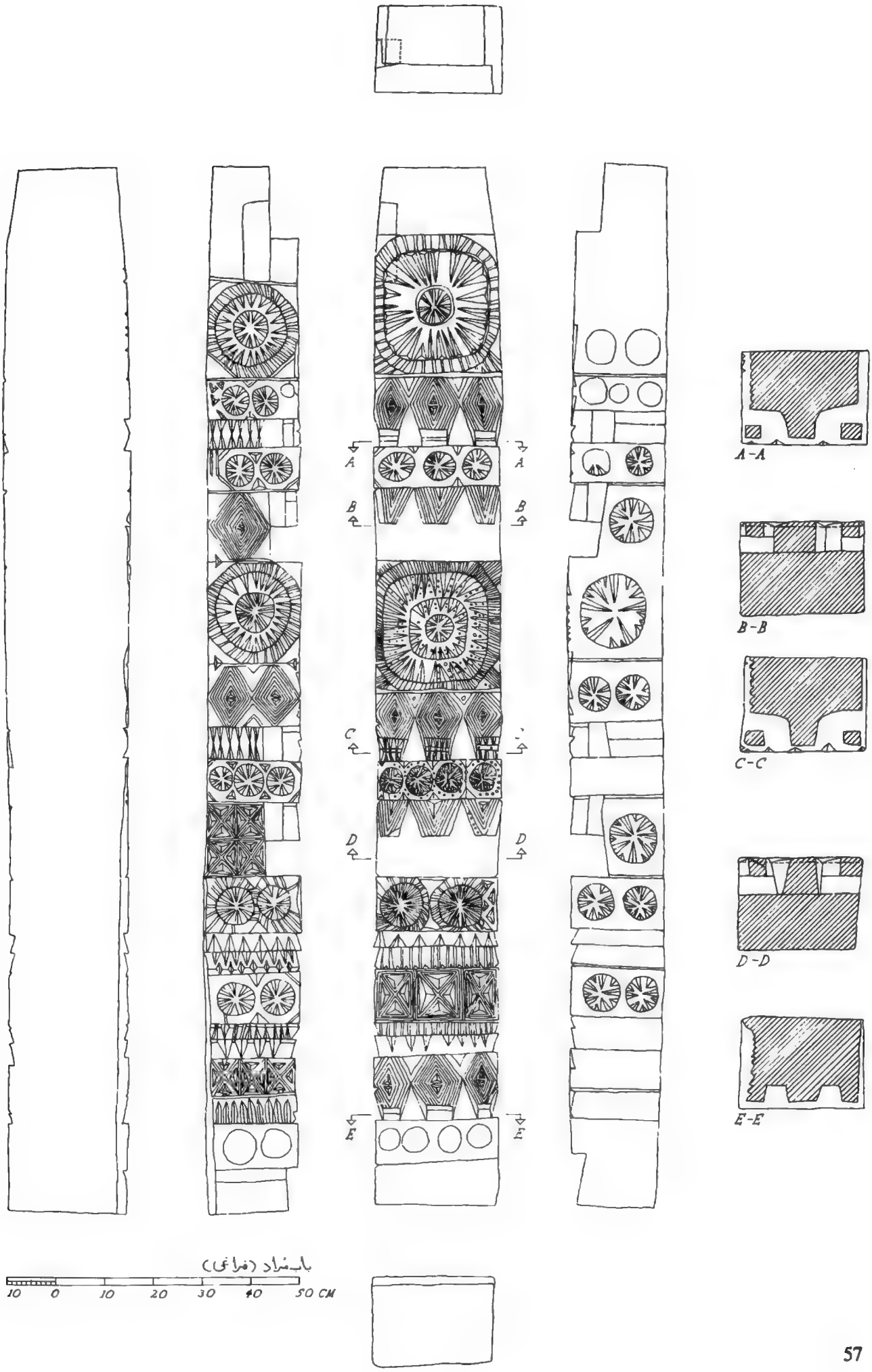
Fig. 276

gaard Museum in Århus (inventory no. E 852).

Babamorad Feraghi of the Kabul Museum made these working drawings of the above pillar in 1968 (see also Edelberg & Jones 1979: fig. 24).

Fig. 75: Between Wama and Gusalak. The pillar I bought being carried down Nuristan's wild valleys – a long journey. The carriers have just emerged from a natural tunnel in the mountain. Every article in a museum has its own special story of how it was acquired, seldom known to the museum personnel or the visitor. Photo: L.E. April, 1948.

Fig. 76: The purchased pillar, measured and drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.


A
B
C
D
E
A-A
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10 0 10 20 30 40 50 CM

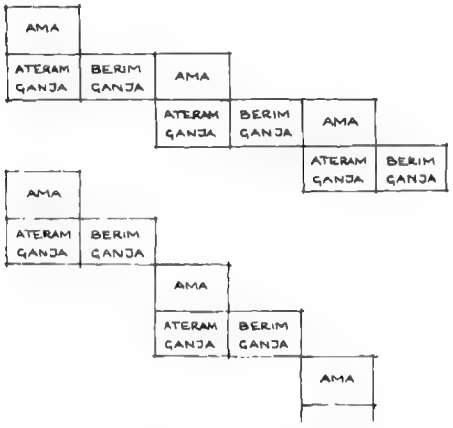
House types in the Wama-Waigal area

By Schuyler Jones

Ed.'s note: In chapter I L.E. has identified a kind of general type of house in each region, and in the foregoing he has described particular examples from the Waigal and Ashkun areas. Before continuing to the next region some observations are brought here, prepared in Dec. 1982 by Schuyler Jones from his field notes:

There is a rather easily recognizable 'typical' domestic dwelling type common to Waigal and Ashkun. This has been identified and specific examples have been given. But the fieldworker who visits Waigali and Ashkun villages will find many houses or, indeed, entire villages, which depart in some way from the examples given here. The village of Chimi in Waigal Valley, for instance, has a somewhat unusual appearance and it is a moment or two before the reason is evident. From a distance it appears that there are scarcely any houses with *berim-ganja*. When you go into the village to investigate it soon becomes apparent that the *berim-ganja* are there, but each one is hidden behind the *ama* of the house immediately below on the mountain slope, thus:

Unlike most Waigali and Ashkun villages, Chimi is built on a relatively gentle slope. The 'normal' pattern for Waigal and Ashkun is this:



But, having established this, we then travel on to Wama and promptly find another variation. The houses have an *ama* and an *ateram-ganja* and, projecting out in front of the *ama* there is a verandah, but there is no *berim-ganja* underneath. The verandah is propped up on poles and the open space underneath is empty, or stacked with firewood. Here, too, the explanation is simple. Wama (Sūndesh) is built on a very steep slope some 300 m above the Pech River. The Winter stables are down near the river and all the hay is stored near the stables, rather than up in the village in the houses. So there is no need for *berim-ganja* in the village.

If we travel further on into the western part of Ashkun to the village of Nakara, we find yet another variation. At first glance the village appears to be of what we might now call the 'Wama type', that is, there are no *berim-ganja* under the verandahs. But, going into the village to have a closer look, we quickly find that there are *berim-ganja,* but instead of being below and in front of the *ama,* they have been built up next to the *ama,* or in some cases, the empty space under the verandah (and in front of the *ateram-ganja*) has been retained and the *berim-ganja* built below.

Within each village there are further variations, for different houses have been built at different times by different craftsmen. One could go on to give further examples of such variations for each region, and yet at the same time we can recognize that there is a basic 'norm' for each area.

In 1896 Robertson had this to say about the villages of the Parun Valley (p. 483):

"The only regularly walled villages with which I am acquainted are in Presungul [Parun]. Their general construction is as follows. The houses are packed together on and in the substance of a mound or rounded hillock.[9] Many of the rooms are underground. At the foot of the slope, a short distance away, there is a protecting wall topped with brushwood. At Pushkigrom [Pashki], the lowest village in the valley, the arrangement is somewhat different. There the houses are built on a slope which is surmounted by watch-towers, from which extend walls which run down to and encircle the houses. This surrounding wall is strengthened with barricades at different points, and looks very strong."[10]

– and from p. 491:

"The villages themselves are either built on a hillock or on a slope. There is one exception to this rule in the case of the village called Diogrom [Dewa], which is on level ground close by the river."

Also on p. 491, Robertson continues with this description of houses in Pashki:

"In the lower part of the valley, at Pushkigrom, wood is abundant, and the domiciles are built almost exclusively of round poles, very little masonry being used in their construction."

Fig. 79: Part of Pashki village. In the background the wall Ram-üyu. *See also pictures 182 and 209. Photo: L.E. 1948.*

9. Pronz and Shtiwe belong to this kind. An example of this is shown in the following chapter: A house from the mound of Pronz.
10. This wall with watch-towers is called *Ram-yu/Ramüyu*.

A house in the village of Pashki (Üšüt)

On the 26th of July 1964 Abdur Rahim, Istan-tadba (i.e. of the Istan clan) led me to the house I'm about to describe. He was, incidentally, *malik,* that is official spokesman of the village. As stated by Robertson, the whole of Pashki is built on the sloping rock above the fields along the right hand bank of the Parun river. As can be seen from the map, Pashki is exposed to the south-east. I don't know why Abdur Rahim choose just this house – it belonged to a man by the name of Ra-Ülum-Cu, – not an Islamic-sounding name. His forefather Yelimač Gabr had built it before the conversion to Islam, which means to say before 1896. The house looked a bit humble, but didn't seem to differ from the other houses of Pashki. I was interested in surveying a house, and not, at least initially, in asking sociological or ethnographic questions, which, by the way, is not so easy in Parun.

In the Parun Valley people's conceptions are so closely related to the valley and the river that they can be difficult for us to comprehend; our terms are less attached to localities – they are more general or abstract. I say *the* river, as the tributaries are so small and insignificant that the Parun is predominant, even on the stretch from Shtiwe to Pashki (see map). Georg Morgenstierne has already pointed out how the Prasun vocabulary – especially prepositions and words indicating directions – is closely connected with the valley's topography.[11]

To get to Ra-Ülum-Cu's house, one had to cross the roof tops of some neighbours, *üreš'og.* All the houses I've seen in Pashki were of two storeys, and they were often built adjoining one another. – Thus Ra-Ülum-Cu's house was jammed in between his two neighbours and his roof served as a verandah for the house built directly behind. He, however, had his own little verandah, *bəṭ,* in front of his house.

Fig. 80: The house measured. From the verandah there are a couple of simple steps, made from wood and stones, up to the threshold. Photo: L.E. July, 1964.

11. Georg Buddruss has gone into this matter very thoroughly, and has generously given me permission to draw on his extensive, but as yet unpublished, knowledge. Whether or not I have been able to relate this correctly, is entirely my own responsibility. The following nomenclature is Georg Buddruss'.

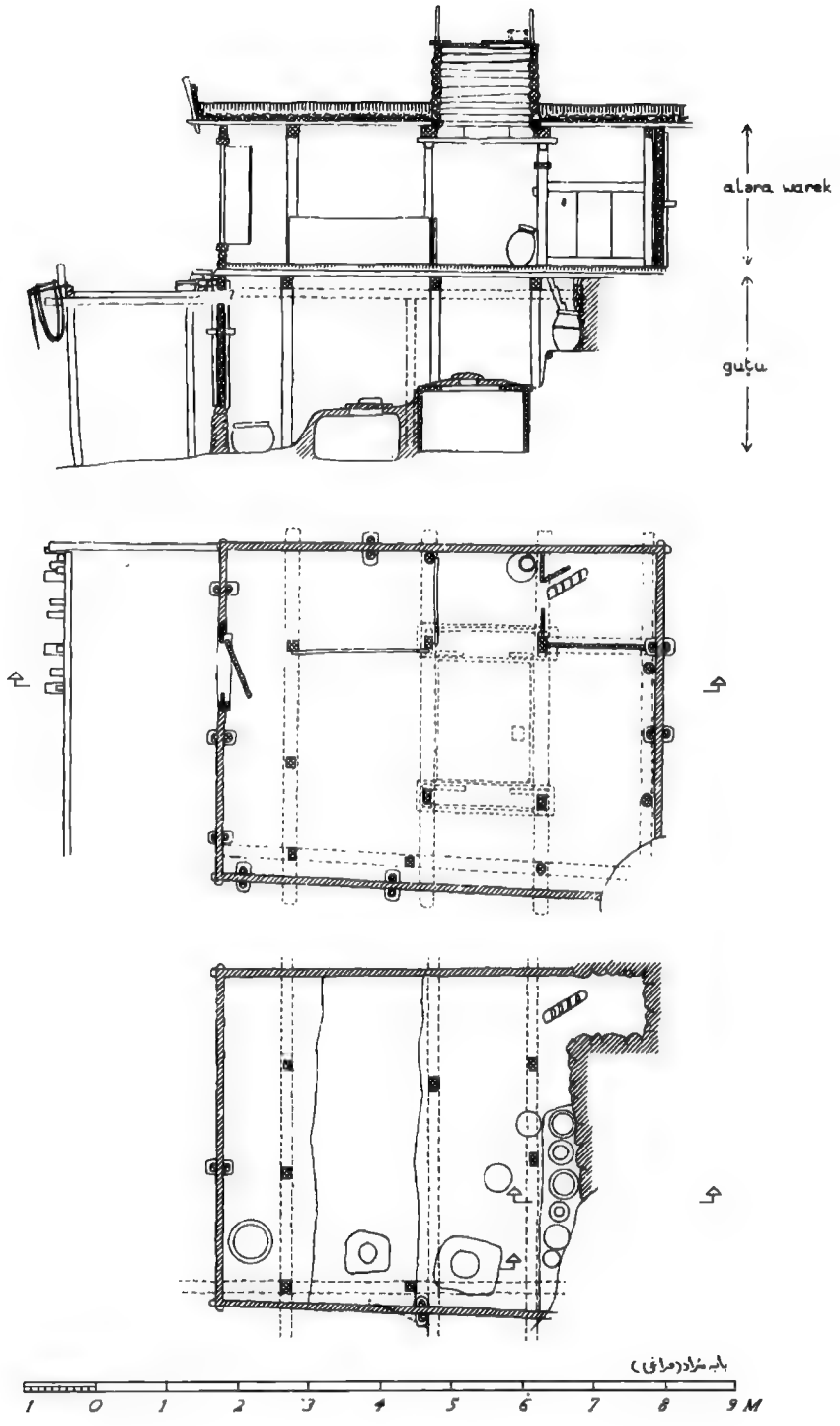


Fig. 81: Ra-Ülum-Cu's house in Pashki. Measured by L.E. on the 26th of July, 1964. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 81

The front door, *zī*, placed a little to the left of the center-line, led to the main room of the house, *ələra warek* (literally: upper house).

In the *ələra warek* there were the usual four pillars around the hearth – in this case they were undecorated. The depth of the room was greater than the width, and there were more pillars than the above mentioned four – a not uncommon trait in the Parun villages. The cliff jutted into the room at the back right-hand corner.

The only way one could gain access to the lower storey, *guṭu*,[12] (literally: lower house), was through a cupboard-like construction in the back lefthand corner, and down a short ladder. The room *guṭu* did not attain full height until close to the front wall.

I have up to now used the terms "left" and "right" as I am under the impression that these expressions are appropriate in Waigali. In Parun, however, one's orientation is expressed according to the river which since time immemorial has run down the valley, on its way from its source up near the holy lakes of Sujum-sur and Chening-sur, past all the villages in the valley, and leading to an unknown world, of no concern to the Parun people. Since the human body can be made to turn and twist and to move at random, it is of no use when defining directions. There is, for instance, an expression for the left hand: *kṣu*, but the concept of "right" or "left" does not play any part in orienting oneself. When Georg Morgenstierne (1949: p. 250), states that *asra* means: "to the left", this is only true if one stands facing the source of the Parun river. I will in the following try to adapt Georg Buddruss' information to my surveys.

The upper storey of a Pashki house – the Waigali *āmâ* – is called *ələra warek* in the Prasun language.[13]

According to Georg Buddruss the people of the Parun valley perceive their four-pillared living room as follows:

Fig. 82

The area between the four pillars A, B, C, D is called *ṣut*. The fireplace, *aneglek*, is here, and above it comes the louver, *əwaik*, with a smole-hole, *ülyum leptega əwaik*.

Na – indicates down-river (German: talab), and
zə̆ – indicates up-river (German: talauf), while
wa and *sa* indicate concrete directions across the valley, which are, in fact, impossible to translate. Thus the pillars in Prasun are called:

A: *naryogpan wapəḍig üštyū* (*üštyū* = pillar)
B: *naryogpan sapəḍig üštyū*
C: *žaryogpan sapəḍig üštyū*
D: *žaryogpan wapəḍig üštyū*

The four walls are similarly called:

W_1: *naryog ṣut* (*ṣut* = wall here, but also = the floor of the hearth, cf. above).
W_2: *sāryog ṣut*
W_3: *žāryog ṣut*
W_4: *wāryog ṣut*

12. My informants called the upper and lower storeys *ələratarek* and *tuguṭu*, using the locative forms corresponding to our situation when the information was given me.
13. Georg Morgenstierne has, however, also registered *um'ū* for the above, but according to Georg Buddruss this is no longer known.

Furthermore, one distinguishes between the square areas adjoining the hearth-square, *ṣut*, and the four corner squares. The former are called:

a: *üštyū žoscī ṭāw*
b: *üštyū woscī ṭāw*
c: *üštyū noscī ṭāw*
d: *üštyū soscī ṭāw*

a is the women's part of the room, c the men's.
The corner-areas are called:

x: *üb'og*
y: *ubūnug*

In the corner z Georg Buddruss usually, though not always, found the trap-door leading to the lower storey. Georg Bruddruss has not attributed the corner v any characteristics.

The system of directions in the Prasun language is just as firmly rooted as are our points of the compass, and they are valid in all six villages in the valley, no matter which side of the river they are on. In the following section, when I talk about pillars and walls close to the river or the mountain, it should be noted that these terms would not be appropriate if applied to Dewa, as it lies on the opposite bank to all the other villages. In our system, a person travelling towards the north will suddenly – when he has crossed the North Pole – find himself travelling southwards, whereas people from Dewa who are travelling in the *sa*-direction will go on doing so even after they have crossed the bridge over the river. *Sa-* and *wa-* are opposite directions in the whole Prasun-speaking world.

Fig. 80

In Ra-Ülum-Cu's house, all the walls in the upper storey and most of the front and lateral walls in the lower storey are built of round or slightly trimmed logs, kept in place by the construction feature that is called *pik'ū* and *nakurä* in Waigal.

I did not investigate these walls very throughly; they were rendered with clay

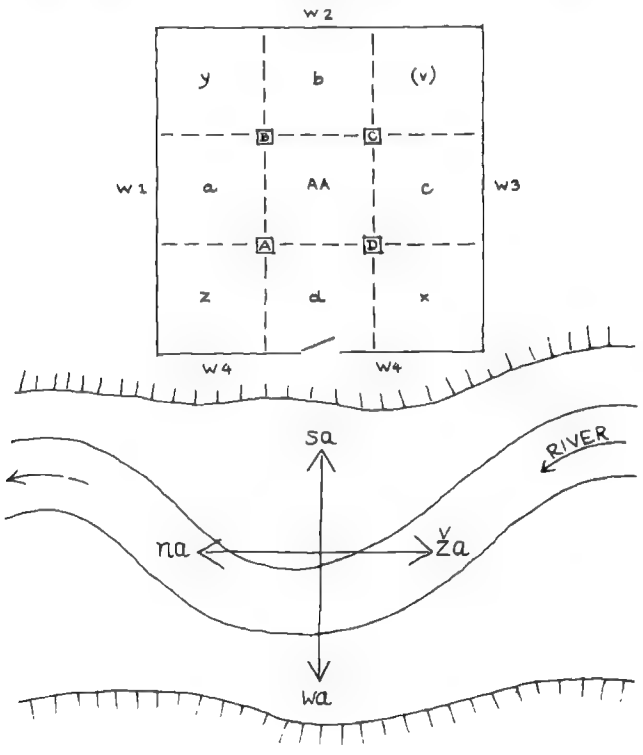


Fig. 82: Diagram drawn by L.E. showing the plan of an ama, *and how the conception of the four quarters of the globe is related to the Parun River.*

cf. Fig. 15

both outside and inside. There is reason to suppose that every other log continues further than the corner of the wall, and every other one stops in the corner. In other words it is fairly certain that the logs were not jointed together, and also that there was not a layer of rubble between the logs (as is the custom in Waigal houses). This rubble filling between the vertical logs is, however, used in some other houses in Pashki.

Ra-Ülum-Cu's *alәra warek* is not square; the width is less than the depth. About a meter from the front wall there is a row of three pillars supporting a roof beam, and if one were to reckon the room as beginning from here, it would have been practically square. In the middle of this square room is the hearth, surrounded by four pillars, which are as already mentioned undecorated. The area around the fireplace is a little broader than it is deep. The pillars do not continue down into the *guṭu*. They all have a little block of wood on top of them – a simple "capital".

Fig. 83 & 84

The *na*-pillars (A & B) and the *ža*-pillars (C & D) each support a little shelf, *ištīk,* on top of these capitals.

On top of these shelves lie the two roof beams, *ninzә,* running in the same direction as the valley, so that the beam behind the hearth is carried by the *sa*-pillars (B and C, nearest the mountain) while the beam in front of the hearth is supported by the *wa*-pillars (A and D, nearest the river). The third beam parallel to the valley has already been mentioned. A fourth beam runs across the back of the room, close to *saryog ṣut* (wall W_2) supported by two pillars, each roughly 1½ m (approx. 5 ft) from the corners.

Fig. 83: The alәra warek, *seen from about the middle of the room, looking towards the y-corner (on the diagram). Photo: L.E. July, 1964.*

The roof is thus carried by four, not two, roof beams, the ends of which obviously rest upon the lateral walls, *naryog ṣut* (W_1) and *žāryog ṣut* (W_3). The *wa*-roof beam just in front of the hearth is also supported by a pillar close up to the *naryog ṣut* (W_1). The three beams nearest the river are moreover supported by a transverse beam just inside the *ža*-wall (W_3), which in turn rests on three pillars. The next layer on top of the beams consists of planks as far as the *wa*-side of the ceiling is concerned, but on the *sa*-side of the ceiling it is of poles, and I think this is also the case over the women's and men's squares (a & c). Whether this layer is of planks or poles, it is called *kəṭə* (or maybe just as often: *wičyog*). On top of these comes a layer of wooden slabs, *watələ*.

As the *kəṭə* (*wičyog*) project a little over the walls, the roof has eaves. The rim of the roof is supported by horizontal poles, and also, along *waryog ṣut*, by a plank on edge. To help keep these in place, a peg, *mü*, has here and there been driven through the ends of some of the more solid *kəṭə* (*wičyog*).

Let us return to the inside of the upper storey: a pair of shelves placed over the *na*- and *za*-pillars have previously been mentioned, the so called *ištĭk* or *əbag latenig ištĭk* (= small-things place-high shelf). An upright board placed between the pillars forms a back wall for these shelves, so "small-things" have to be put up on them from the side facing the hearth, where there is an opening a couple of feet wide between the boards placed on edge at either end of the shelf.

Between the two *sa*-pillars (B & C) there is another shelf a little lower down (just below the capitals), without a back wall. Its forked ends fit around the pillars and as it is also firmly compressed between the pillars, it can neither slide out nor slip down.

Fig. 81, section

In the roof above the hearth-square there is a nearly cubical space, *əwaik* – a louver – in which the smoke is supposed to collect and from which it escapes through the smoke-hole, *ülyum leptega əwaik*, in the flat roof.

cf. Fig. 30

The walls of the louver are built of horizontal poles, which are kept in place by passing a vertical pole, one in each corner, through holes in the ends of the horizontal poles. These four poles rise two feet or so (approx. 50 cm) above the

Fig. 84: The shelf on top of the ža*-pillars is seen to the right, and the shelf between the* sa*-pillars to the left. Photo: L.E. July 1964.*

louver's flat roof, which consists of four boards, all of different width, placed in the direction of the valley. The back board but one had a square hole in it, covered by a round chimney. Seen from the outside, this whole arrangement resembles a little house on top of the roof. The bottom poles in the louver construction are, to the *na-* and *ža*-sides, a continuation of the poles in the *kəṭə* layer. But on the *wa-* and *sa*-sides the bottom poles can naturally only be of the same width as the louver, and to prevent them from slipping out of place, pegs have been inserted, tilting upwards, into the hearth-side of the roof beam.

Fig. 84

In the corner marked v on the diagram the bed-rock protrudes into the room. There was nothing noteworthy in the x-corner, *üb'og*. The z-corner was enclosed on two sides by wooden slabs about 2 feet (approx. 60 cm) high. The one was supported by *naryogpan wapəḍig üštyū* (the pillar A) and the most down-river, *na*-pillar in the "extra" row just inside the door, and the other was leaning up against the pillar A and the extra pillar alongside *naryog ṣut* (the wall W_1). This served as sleeping quarters, *pəg'ā,* probably for the housewife, and was filled with hay during the winter time. A cupboard-like construction takes up *ubūnug* (the y-corner). The walls go from *naryogpan sapəḍig üštyū* (the pillar B) to the *na*-wall (W_1) and the *sa*-wall (W_2). They are not quite four feet tall (a little more than 1 m), and constructed of panels let into grooves in the "lintel" and "sill". There is a door of the usual type leading from the women's area (a) and opening onto a log ladder leading down to the *guṭu*. The cupboard had a top covering and all manner of household effects could be placed here.

Where one comes down the ladder and into the *guṭu,* the back wall is directly under the back wall (W_2) of the *aləra warek* – otherwise this wall is closer to the river; in fact the mountain-side protrudes so much into the room that one can only stand upright near the front wall.

Fig. 81

The ceiling is supported by seven pillars, rather haphazardly placed, which in turn carry three roof beams. The "up-river" (*ža*) ends of the beams are supported on a transverse beam just inside the *ža*-wall.

Up against the back wall was a shelf-arrangement for clay pots with lids, and

Fig. 85: The back wall of the gutu. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

below this some different-sized storage-bins were set into the "floor". Such vessels can be lined with panels and are usually covered by large stone slabs, which have a circular hole, about a foot in diameter (approx. 30 cm), which is covered by a lid, usually also of stone. These stone slabs rested on some horizontal laths and were packed with clay along all edges, so as to be mouse-proof. At the bottom part of *guṭu,* nearest the front wall, lay a stone jar with a lid.

Fig. 86: A storage bin in the guṭu, *practically submerged in the floor. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

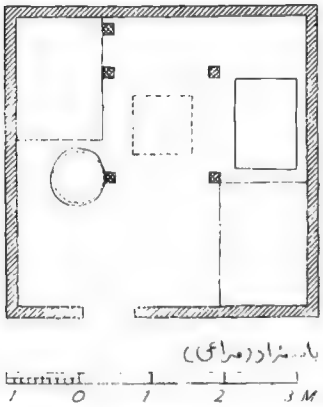


Fig. 87: The above is an incomplete survey made by L.E. on the 18th of May 1948. The house, also from Pashki, is rather smaller than the previous one. According to L.E.'s diary the descent to the lower storey is in the y-corner of the room, in a covered cubicle, as in Ra-Ülum-Cu's house. The sleeping quarters are, however, exactly the opposite, namely in the x-corner and are (quote): "covered by a shelf", ostensibly similar to the "cupboard" over the descent. The circular object is a wooden cylinder with a stone lid used for storing flour. The rectangular object in the c-area is a chest for clothes.

Fig. 88: The stone top of a storage-bin such as described above, from Pashki, though not from the house surveyed. To the right a chest for storage is glimpsed; note the projecting tenons. Photo: L.E. 1964.

A house from the mound of Pronz (Säič)

Robertson 1896, wrote about the houses of the upper Parun Valley, p. 488, ff.

"The houses of the Presun or Viron Káfirs differ in many respects from those already described. Perhaps the most obvious and striking peculiarity of the Viron houses is that their accomodation is principally underground. This arrangement is more particularly noticeable in the upper, and consequently colder, part of the valley. In that position, also, wood being scarce, it is sparingly used in the construction of the walls. The timber used is not shaped with the axe, as in the Bashgul Valley, but is used in the form of round poles. The large proportion of mud and rubble to timber gives the houses a somewhat badly built appearance. There are no verandahs to break the ugly lines of the buildings...."

"...In the villages of the upper part of the valley, that part of the houses which emerges above ground is very like the doorways which open on to the lanes, being rarely more than 3 feet 6 inches or four feet high. The houses are packed together closely, and the paths between them are hardly broad enough for a man with moderately broad shoulders. Many of the houses have three apartments, one below the other, one being half underground, and the other two completely so. I carefully examined the house of the Shtevgrom [Shtiwe] priest. From the roadway, a 3 feet 6 inch doorway opened on to a short ladder, by which the floor of the dwelling-room was reached. That apartment was twenty feet square, but only seven feet high. The roof was supported by numerous pillars, all of which were grotesquely carved into a supposed resemblance of gods or goddesses. Four pillars, carved with more than usual care, bounded the hearth in the ordinary way. Each was made to resemble, more or less, a man on horseback. The horseman was given an enormous face, shield-shaped, 1½ feet long by ten inches at the broadest part, the brows. The chin was not more than an inch and a half from the top of the diminutive horse's head. The rider's left hand rested on the horse's neck. What at first sight looked like an enormous ear, turned out to be the horseman's right arm grasping a weapon. The tiny animal itself was given a little stand, such as a toy horse has. The nose of the effigy was scored by parallel lines, intersected at right angles by similar parallel lines. All the other pillars in the room were similarly carved into grotesque male or female forms, except that they were not provided with horses. Above the hearth, which was seven feet square, there was a wooden structure four feet square, which projected above the level of the roof about four feet. This was roofed, and in one corner of it there was a smoke-hole of a foot square. This peculiar chimney is very common in Presungul. From the dwelling-room a ladder led into a lower apartment, which was not more than five feet in height. There was yet another room, lower still, which was reached in a similar way. There it was possible to stand upright. From this lowest apartment a tunnel ran under the village wall to the river-bank. A second tunnel, which I was solemnly informed had been originally constructed by Yush (the devil), burrowed under the village tower or citadel".

The coniferous forests of Parun do not reach further than Dewa. The three uppermost villages in Parun are built in the middle of the U-shaped valley, rather near the riverbed. As timber is scarce, the walls of the houses are mainly built of stone. Dewa, Pronz and Shtiwe form real *têpes* (mounds); the *têpe* of Pronz is particularly distinct. The narrow lanes between the houses have been filled up with rubbish so that the houses today are chiefly underground, especially those in the

Fig. 89: The village of Pronz in the Parun Valley. Photo: L.E. May, 1954. Cf. fig. 16 in chapter I.

central part of the hamlet. Archaeological diggings in the narrow lanes of Pronz would no doubt give interesting results.

If the *têpe* is young, the findings might have a direct bearing on the evidence of oral tradition. Another line of enquiry could also be followed: If the characteristics of the Prasun language – including the specification of directions – are very old, as is assumed by some investigators, the fact that the houses have four pillars around the hearth might likewise be archaic.

This serves to emphasize what could be gained from future archaeological diggings in the village mound of Pronz, particularly now that we are familiar with their household effects and would be able to identify fragments of buildings and other items of material culture.

When one considers the position the Kafir-languages occupy in the Indo-European family of languages and its Indo-Arian branch, and when one compares this with theories about Indo-European expansion in Neolithic times, archaeological diggings assume interesting aspects. For instance: was the Parun Valley inhabited *before* the Indo-Europeans came there, and *when* did the latter arrive in this sky-high valley?

On the 30th of July 1964 the malik Amir Khan arranged for me to survey a house; I don't know the name of the owner or why that house was chosen, but as it was situated right in the middle of the village, where the hillock was at its highest, it was very appropriate with regard to the above.

To get to the house, one wandered along narrow lanes, apparently between one-storeyed little houses. When they turned out to be three-storeyed, it was conve-

Fig. 90: The roof of the house recorded is to the left, and the lane leading to it to the right. The chimney-frame is seen in the middle of the picture. Photo: L.E. 1964.

nient to suppose that the soil level in the lanes had gradually risen due to accumulation of debris.

This is probably the case in some places – anyway, it is one of the things I would like to go further into if I should ever go back there.

Fig. 91

The level of the lane that gives access to the house surveyed is the same as the floor level of the top storey, and further investigations proved that the lane passes over part of the hearth-room – the part that lay closest to the mountain. The lane lies parallel to the river – it would be useful for my reader to remember this for future reference.

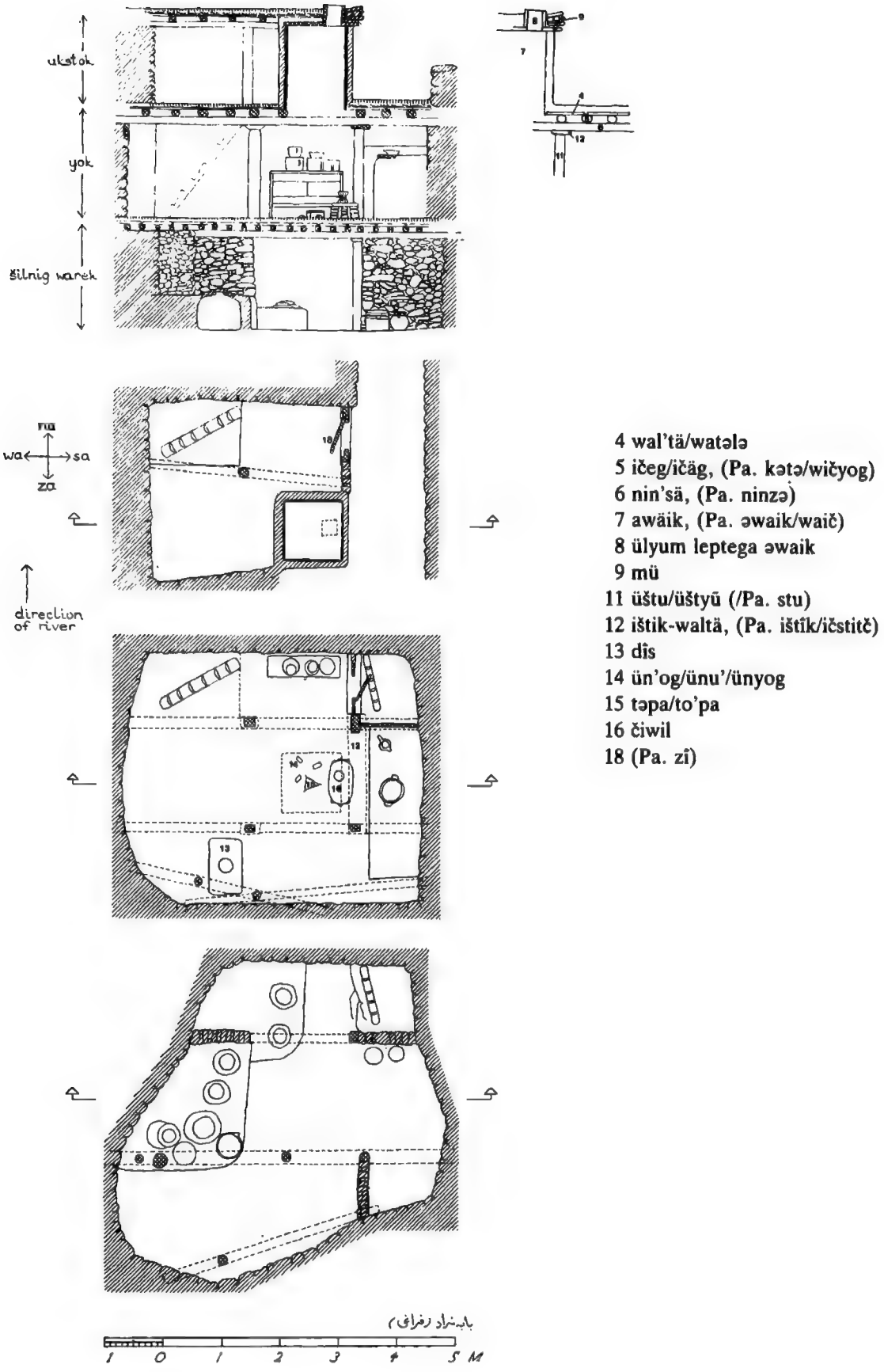


Fig. 91: On the 30th of July, 1964, L.E. measured this house in Pronz. Drawing by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 92: The entrance to the house surveyed. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Editor's note: i.e. the river runs on the left of the plan fig. 91 and the mountain is on the right. Contrary to the general map, north is downwards on this figure. Thus the lane passes over the areas marked v, b and y on the diagram shown for the house from Pashki.

Fig. 82

One steps from the lane through a low doorway into a low-ceilinged room, *ukstok*, where the nearest left-hand corner was taken up by the chimney coming up from below, and the furthest right-hand corner by the descent to the room below, *yok* (Pashki: *alәra warek*).

The *yok* had four hearth pillars. In the y-corner of the room, there was a cupboard-like construction like the one in Ra-Ülum-Cu's house in Pashki, enclosing a log-ladder leading to the storey below, called *šilnig warek*.[14]

14. I think, however, that I must have misunderstood my informants here as *šilnik warek*, according to Georg Buddruss, means literally: house for sitting. Neither of the names *ukstok* and *yok* are recorded in Buddruss' material, but he suggests I should adhere to these, for the time being anyway, (although *yok* will probably turn out to be a misunderstanding of the word *üyug/yug* = stable).

Fig. 93: The descent to the yok *from the* ukstok. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

cf. Fig. 29

It is my impression that in Pashki, Zumu and Kushteki all louvers and chimneys appear as small "houses" on top of the roof. These are also seen in Pronz, but are by no means the invariable rule. Only the smoke-hole, framed by a little "chimney-box", was to be seen on the roof of this house.

Ed.'s note: If the upper room, the *ukstok*, was added later, this louver has originally been on top of the roof of the house.

Fig. 92

As mentioned, one enters the house through a low door in the stone wall. The edge of the roof is fortified by a horizontal pole, upon which lie flat slate stones.

Fig. 90

When one walks on the roof of a "block" of houses in Pronz, these roof edgings are also visible at right angles to the lanes, supposedly marking the boundaries. I say "supposedly" as the row of stones nearest the camera rather confuses me.

cf. Fig. 91 plans

If it marks the upper edge of the louver, then this boundary does not continue vertically down through the other storeys. If, on the other hand, the picture is misleading and the stones are a couple of feet away from the louver, then there must be another room in the top storey, *ukstok*, that I did not observe an entrance to and which nobody made me aware of. May I once again refer to the hectic atmosphere of impatience and curiosity which prevails whilst one is surveying and measuring.

Let us duck down and go through the doorway, which is flanked by panels that are rather sturdier than usual and rabbetted to receive the door. The door is hinged on the right side (an exception to the rule), and has a groove, chopped slightly "upwards" for a handle. All the *ukstok* walls are of stone. One sole pillar supports a beam running at right angles to the river. On top of this rest six poles, four of which can be seen on the section. They are not quite parallel to the walls. The two walls enclosing the louver are of mud-daubed wicker-work, (the willow branches are only visible from the hearth in the *yok*). The fact that the louver is made of wickerwork, whereas the louvers that are visible above the roofs have walls of poles or panels, gives rise to speculation as to whether the *ukstok* was built at the same time as the rest of the house or added later on.

Editor's note: There are, however, several photos of wickerwork chimneys from Shtiwe. Cf. chapter I.

One passes down to the hearth room, the *yok*, through a square opening (without a trapdoor) in the "down-river, close-to-the-river" corner of the *ukstok*. A log-

Fig. 93 ladder led down to the z-corner of the *yok*. The walls are all stone-built. I did not notice any signs of a door having been boarded or bricked up, but I must admit I was not looking for them either, as I hadn't at the time realized the bearing this could have on the possibility that the *yok* might have previously been the top storey of the house.

Fig. 94 The most interesting of the four pillars is the B-pillar: it is much broader than the others in the direction of the valley and is decorated with a chequered pattern

Fig. 94: Looking from the hearth towards the descent in the y-corner of the yok. *The* čiwil *is seen to the right and behind it stands a great chest. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

on the side visible in the photograph, (the carvings are not clearly seen in the picture; they were partly daubed with clay). The A-pillar supports a simple capital, as does the D-pillar. The B- and C-pillars support a shelf, *ištik-waltä,* (G. Buddruss: *ištik-watəl*), directly beneath the beams and, according to my notes, without a back wall.

We now come to a rather remarkable fact: the beams, *nīnzə,* carried by these four pillars lie at *right-angles* to the river; thus the A- and B-pillars support the one and the D- and C-pillars support the other *nīnzə.* So the shelf *could* have had a back wall, and there could also have been a similar shelf between the A- and D-pillars, – which, however, there wasn't. Had there been such a shelf one would inevitably have bumped one's head on it when entering the room.

Fig. 95: One of the firedogs. Photo: L.E. 1964.

The hearth area was quite traditional with a tripod, *təpa,* and three stone firedogs, *ün'og,* resembling ram's horns. Behind these movable items, which were directly under the chimney, there was a large, oblong, flat stone, *čiwil,* on two piles of smaller stones at either end. All sorts of kitchen utensils were placed on *čiwil,* and ashes were pushed in under it.

As already mentioned, the louver, *əwaik,* has wickerwoven walls. The smoke-hole is as usual placed on the side nearest to the mountain, and is in this case bordered by wooden slabs halved together in the corners. The whole chimney is not quite centrally placed in the hearth square – it is closest to pillar C.

There are two more pillars close to the W_3-wall. Together with the walls they support two beams that cross each other at an obtuse angle. On top of all these beams lie eleven rather sturdy logs, *ičeg* (Pashki: *wičyog*), placed in the direction of the valley. These in turn support numerous short, flat – though not very broad – pieces of wood, *wal'tä* (G. Buddruss: *watəl*). I noticed that several of these had been used before for other purposes.

In the y-corner is a cupboard-like construction very similar to the one in Ra-Ülum-Cu's house in Pashki, apart from the fact that the door is hinged on the right-hand side, as is the entrance door leading from the lane. From here and almost over to the W_3-wall is an enormous chest, (the back wall of the room probably serves as the back wall of the chest). There was also a chest for wheat-storage, *dīs,* between the two "extra" pillars along the W_3-wall, jutting out as far as the D-pillar, and a chest in the a-square, opening onto the hearth-square. There were a lot of wooden vessels placed on top of this chest, as was also the case on top of the cubicle enclosing the descent – here close to the W_2-wall, there was also a matchlock gun.

cf. Fig. 98

We now proceed to the "cellar". As the door is hinged on the right side, the four-stepped log-ladder rests against the W_1-wall, just behind the door-panel. At the foot of the ladder a couple of uneven steps lead on down to the floor-level. The cellar, *šilni(k) waräk,* is altogether rather irregular. All the walls are of stone.

Fig. 96

The roof beams of this storey are placed to correspond with the beams in the *yok* storey. The "down-river"-most beam is supported either end on small partitioning walls (the one seen in the picture ends in an upright timber). The "up-river"-most beam rests on four pillars, one of which terminates a third partition wall. A third roof beam runs nearly parallel to the other beams, just inside the rather crooked wall W_3.

Naturally, the *ičeg* on top of these beams lie in the direction of the valley – except in the area directly under the z-corner of *yok.* Here nine or so poles lie parallel to the partitioning wall, resting on the W_4-wall and on the last *ičeg* to cross the whole room in the "normal" way. On the drawing I made on the spot I have

noted: "previous way down?", (without having any knowledge of Georg Buddruss' material at the time). If this is correct, the descent from *ukstok* to *yok* has probably also been in another place. Or maybe the way down to the cellar was moved at a time when the *ukstok* was being built up around the *əwaik* (louver), which in turn again raises the question of whether there originally was an entrance door leading directly into the *yok*.

There are quite a few storage bins in the cellar (of the pit storage type, covered by a big stone slab with a hole to be covered by a stone lid); two opposite the descent to the room, and four next to them, that is to say, under the d-square, *üštyū soscī ṭāw*, of the room above. A lot of other vessels made of clay or wood were placed on top of these storage bins.

Fig. 96: The šilni waräk, *seen from the middle of the room, looking towards the bottom of the log-ladder and a partition wall. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 97: Vessels for storage in the cellar, the šilni waräk. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 98: A chest taken to pieces, photographed in Pronz, but not from the house surveyed. Of the larger pieces, the one to the right is the bottom of the chest; the front and back pieces are placed together in the middle, while on the left is the top component with a hole (to be covered by a lid). Of the smaller pieces in front, the one on the left fits into the top part of the lid (no tenon and slot), while the broader piece on the right fits into the bottom of the lid. Photo: L.E. 1964.

The East Kati (with Kam-Viri) speaking region; The Lower Bashgal Valley

In 1890-1891 Robertson lived in Kamdesh and travelled widely in the Bashgal Valley. He was an accurate observer and his descriptions are worth quoting at length (Robertson 1896: p. 484-488):

"The simplest form of house consists of one apartment, oblong or square in shape, and measuring some 18 by 18 [approx. 6 × 6 m] or 18 by 20 feet. It is usually well built, of cedar timber, and rubble stones embedded in mud mortar. The timbers, fashioned with the axe alone, and roughly morticed together at the angles of the building, form a series of wooden frames upon and between which the masonry is built. These wooden frames are about nine inches apart [just under 23 cm]. The thickness of the walls is about five inches [just under 13 cm]. They are well plastered with mud both inside and out, and are strong and durable. There are sometimes two doors, but usually only one. The door is a solid piece of wood, shaped by the axe [adze] alone. There are no hinges, but small projections from the upper and lower edges are made to revolve in sockets in the door frame. The Kafir slaves, if we consider the indifferent tools at their disposal, are extremely clever at carpentry. In addition to the door or doors there is often a little window. It is usually fifteen or eighteen inches [38 or 46 cm] square, and is closed by a wooden shutter revolving on pivots. The doors are fastened by a wooden bolt, which is made to run easily in a groove cut in the solid substance of the door, and thence into a socket in the door frame. The bolt has vertical notches all along one side. Just above the groove in which it works is a small round hole in the substance of the door. This is the keyhole. The key is a piece of iron wire, about the thickness of the top of the little finger, and more than a foot long. It is bent back in such a way that it is somewhat of the shape of a pot-hook, and can be pushed through the

Fig. 100: Mohammad Zaman (Kamdesh?) showing the corner of a house. Photo: L.E. 1948.

keyhole, and then if it is turned downwards, the end can be made to catch in the slots in the bolt, and the latter can be pushed back and the door opened. Sometimes, however, it is a very tedious operation to get the end of the iron wire to catch in the notches of the bolt. I have often watched a tired-out woman come home from fieldwork and spend a wearisome time before she could get the arrangement to act...."

"In the centre of every room, at each corner of the square hearth, are four wooden pillars, which are often elaborately carved. These pillars are usually between five and six feet [1.53 and 1.83 m] apart, and are either rounded or more or less square in shape. Their diameter varies from nine to fifteen inches [23 to 38 cm]. From the lateral walls of the apartment two large beams cross over, and are mainly supported on the top of the hearth pillars.

Boards covered with beaten-down earth form the roof, but they do not fit accurately, so that snow-water and rain find easy access into the room. The only way to minimise this discomfort is to keep adding earth to the roof, and to get it beaten down or trampled by men or goats. The roof is the worst feature of all Kafir houses. As they are all made in the way described, and are all flat, there is not one which is even moderately water tight. It is necessary that they should be flat, for contiguous roofs form the only level spaces which can be found in some villages where corn can be winnowed or thrashed, or fruit be spread out to dry.

The smoke-hole is over the middle of the hearth. It is usually about a foot [30 cm] square, and has enclosing boards which project a few inches above the level of the roof. It is closed by a flat board with a long handle in the middle being placed over it. The long handle hangs down into the room, whence it can be pushed up and the smoke-hole opened. The hearth square in the centre of the room is raised a few inches above the level of the surrounding floor, and, like the latter, is made of beaten earth. The height of a room does not exceed seven or eight feet [2.13 or 2.44 m].

The foregoing description applies to the house of an average poor Kafir of the Bashgul Valley. In such an apartment he brings up his family. There would probably be also a stable or rough kind of shed leaning against one wall of the house, and more or less completely closed in by mud walls, or by screens made by twisting twigs together.

A better kind of house in the Bashgul Valley consists of two stories, the upper part being reserved for the dwelling-place, and the lower half being used as a cow stable or a wood store. The best built habitations in the Bashgul Valley are those used by the wealthy Káfirs of the Kám tribe. Such dwellings consists of three stories. The top floor is the living place, the middle story is the store-room, while the bottom room is employed as a cow stable or wood store in the winter. In this variety of house a verandah is almost always projected from the top storey. These verandahs, or open wooden galleries, are well-made structures, closed on all sides except in front. They are frequently elaborately ornamented with carving. The projecting floor of the verandah is supported on long wooden pillars, the lower ends of which are securely kept in their proper position on the ground by the nicety with which the weights above are adjusted. The roof of the verandah is upheld by the wooden framework of the structure, and by a row of pillars which runs down the centre of the floor. Frequently all the pillars and the front of the verandah are prettily carved, and its roof-beams, which are allowed to project a foot or more beyond the walls, are fashioned at the ends into effective, if grotesque, animals' heads."

A triple house in Keshtagrom (Kushtoz), Nechingal, Lower Bashgal area

Fig. 99 (colour)

On the 5th-7th August, 1964 I surveyed part of a house belonging to Amir Mohammad (about 75 yrs. old), situated in the lower part of Keshtagrom village. It was just above Abdullah Wakil's house, which belonged to a group of *bari* houses; Amir Mohammad and his family were, however, not artisans but land owners (Kati: *adz'ā*). Abdullah was at the time in Jalalabad as a sort of leader of the Nuristan craftsmen who had been summoned by general Moh. Safar Wakil Gharzai to assist in the Dorunta irrigation project which was being conducted by the Russians on the west part of the Jalalabad plains. Abdullah had, however, introduced me to Amir Mohammad both in 1949 and in 1953, – then the house had not yet been augmented with the extra room seen to the left in the pictures.

Fig. 102

This was my first survey in the area Sir George Scott Robertson had inhabited for more than a year in 1890-91. (cf. biographical sketch by Schuyler Jones in Edelberg & Gramstrup 1971). Robertson was not impeded by ethnographic or ethnological considerations, but he meticulously described what he saw. There is therefore good reason to study his observations – his remarks on the structure of the house and building customs can tell us what has changed since 1890.

Robertson also visited Keshtagrom, which he calls Kashtan. The Nuristanis called Robertson *"Laneprān"*, the bald Frank, and some of the elders of Keshtagrom can remember him once impulsively joining their dance. As Robertson's information is from 1890-91, it is interesting to note what some of my informants told me (especially Amir Mohammad's son-in-law, Khan Mohammad, who was a school teacher in Bagalgrom in 1964): hardly any house in the village was more than 30-40 years old – there had been a fight with the Kamdesh villagers in 1929, during the Afghan civil war and Keshtagrom was burnt. In the house surveyed three was indeed some reused wood in the ceiling of the store-room, originating from these unquiet times and clearly marked by fire.

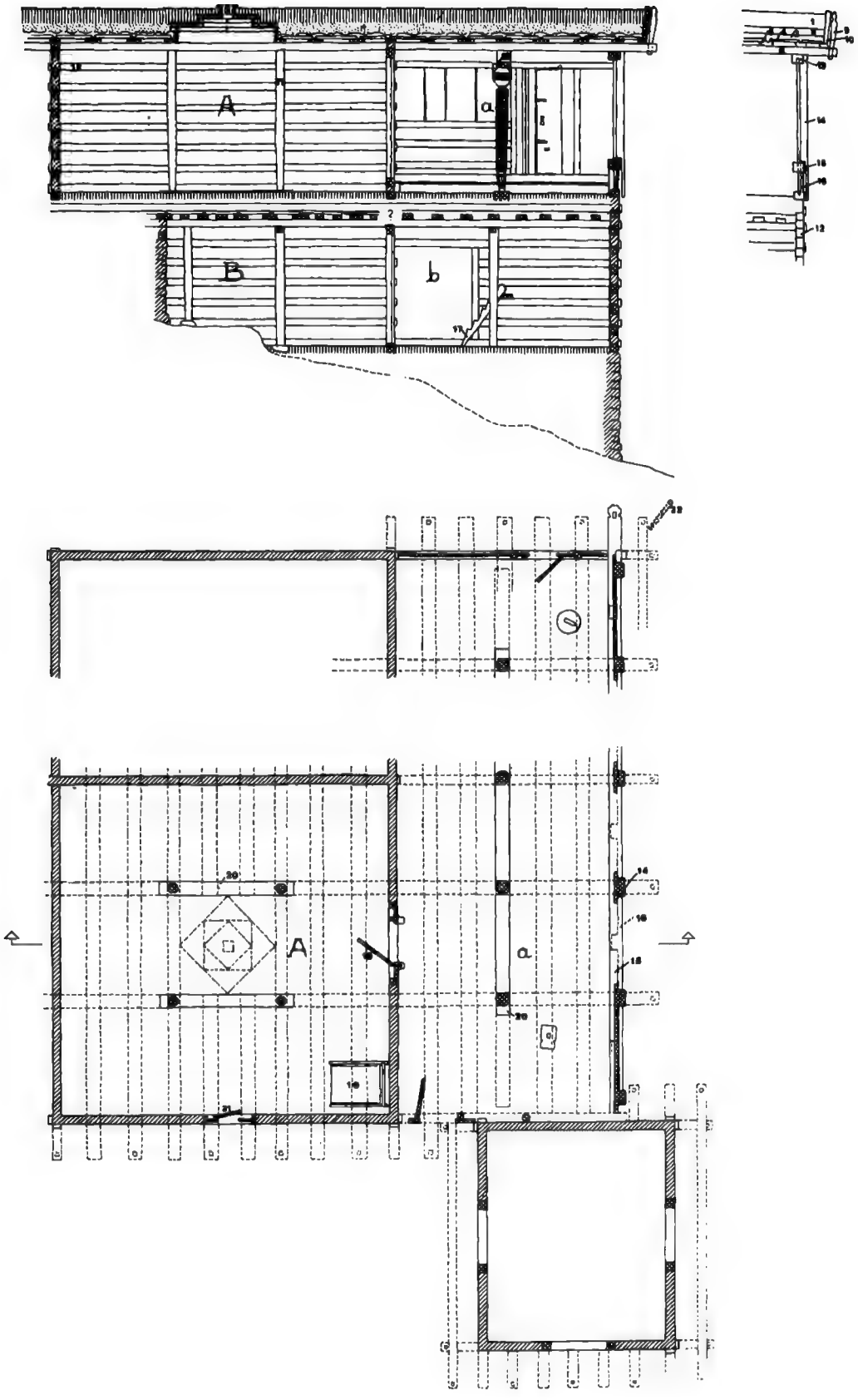
Fig. 117 & 118

The house types in Keshtagrom and Kamdesh are, like the language, very similar.[15]

When I started my work on Amir Mohammad's house I was already aware of the fact that houses in Keshtagrom and Kamdesh could vary a great deal in width, and I had noticed that vertical rows of timber ends jutting out of the walls occured at regular intervals. The carpenter Said Ghulam, Keshtagrom, had told me that a house (or the hearth-room: *amō*, in Waigali: *āmā*, and in Persian: *zir-xana*) ought to be square, namely three *štümbələ* on each side, and that a verandah ought to project two *štümbələ* out in front of the house.

These facts, combined with my own observations of how many openings were to

15 The inhabitants of Keshtagrom and Dungul consider themselves to be of the same stock, originating from Ktiwi (Kantiwo) and descending from *Šup*, an ancestor who lived 22-23 generations ago, as do also the people of Kulum in West-Nuristan (Kulum-Kate). The language spoken in Keshtagrom is, however, not the usual Kati but Kamviri, which is also spoken in Kamdesh and the neighbouring villages, but oral tradition has handed down a different ancestry for the clans living in Kamdesh – thus *Šup* is not known in their lineage.
Concerning the different Kati-dialects, see:
Morgenstierne 1932, p. 40
Deutsche im Hindukush 1937, p. 241
Morgenstierne 1949-50, p. 156
Morgenstierne 1974, p. 4
Strand 1973, p. 298-303
Grjunberg 1980, p. 27


A
a
B
b
A
a

1 mřî
2 pal'ol/pal'āl
3 tac'ərî
4 bit'elə
5 aštrə-garə/aštərə-katə/-kālə
6 wugřə/ařg'u/ug'lə
8 däk
9 agəc-katə
10 piy'ō
11 štyū/štü/(u)štum
12 makř'ik
13 seř/cer/cär
14 bitəl-štyü/betəl-štyü
15 w'enāř-katə/wenā-kələ
16 ačlikunə
17 cik
18 du
19 duk
20 guškunə
21 duw'ok/duak
22 wuz'ol

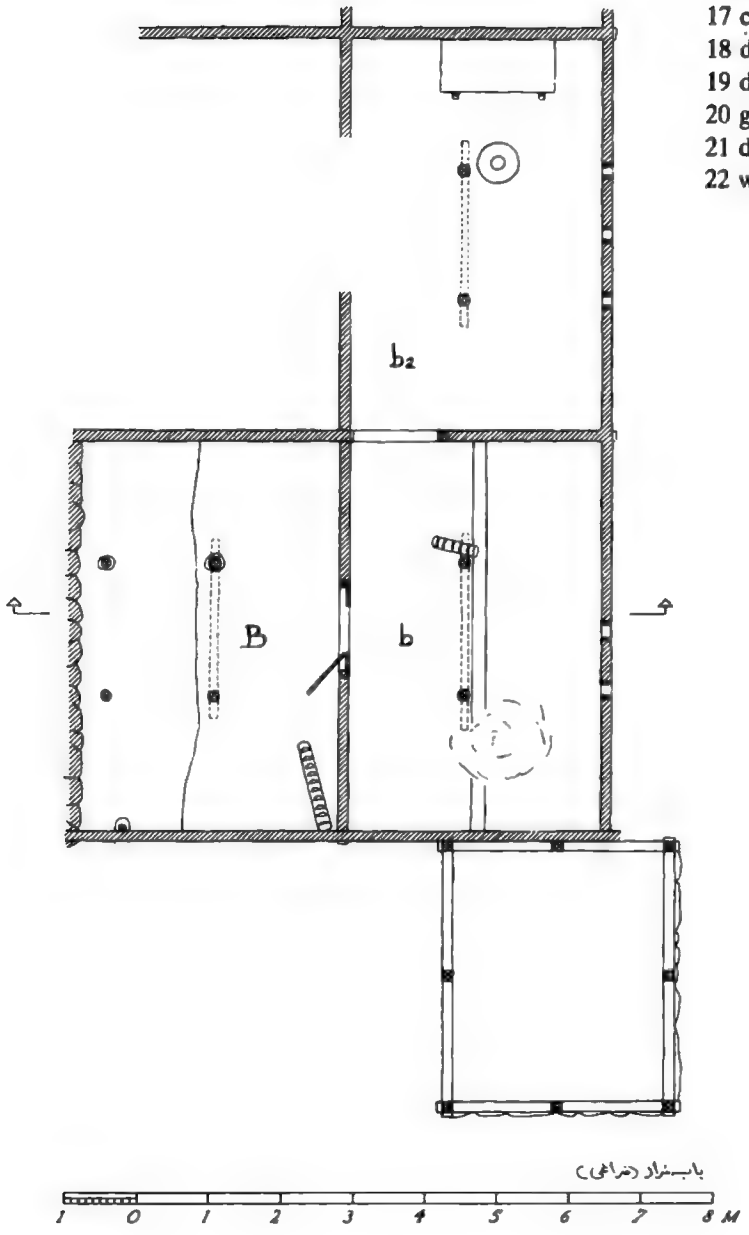


Fig. 101: Part of Amir Mohammad's house in Keshtagrom. Measured by L.E. on the 5th-7th of August in 1964, and drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 102: The house recorded from Keshtagrom, belonging to Amir Mohammad. Photo: L.E. 1964.

be seen in the wooden gallerys, led me to understand that these buildings represented a sort of terraced house. I don't remember when I started to look for the basic unit in these terraced houses; i.e. a single house, but I did finally find one in Kamdesh.

cf. Fig. 126 & 127

One entered Amir Mohammad's house by a rather broad ladder, *šiŕ'i*, placed very steeply on the left side of the house. In 1953, before the extension was added, this ladder was placed against a platform built on long poles, at the same level as and in continuation with the gallery (which was already completed at that time). When the rather dominating corner room was built between 1960 and 1964, another building was also added in the corner between the house and this extension. Against the roof of this building (which is not included in my working drawings) the ladder now rested, and from this roof one could enter both the wooden gallery and the corner room. In other words, the same old Nuristani problem: although ranks and social prestige are expressed in the carvings on so

many buildings, what we could consider a presentable entrance has yet to be found (as far as I know, anyway). Avenues and draw-bridges leading to mansions, or pompous stairways, as known from the feudal times in Europe, would perhaps give an ambitious Nuristani landowner something to think about.

From Amir Mohammad's gallery (a), three doors led into three four-pillared hearth-rooms, *amō*. I limited my measurings to the three *štümbələ* to the left and
Fig. 101 the *štümbələ* to the far right of the nine *štümbələ* – long gallery.

Next, I surveyed the *amō* (A) that lay behind the three bays to the left. A trap-door in the lefthand corner of the room – i.e., in the same position as we would expect from Waigal – opened onto a log-ladder, *çik*, leading down to the store-room (B) from which a door led out to a room (under the gallery) which acted as privy, *gy'ü-tā* (b). As there was no door between this room (b) and the one next to it (b_2) I photographed it but did not actually take any measurements there.

Finally, the new corner building is roughly indicated on the plan. Whether one likes the look of these corner buildings or not, they are apparently becoming popular in Keshtagrom. It is a pleasant room to sit in when one is received there as a guest. From there one has a good view, but seen from the outside this room on stilts obstructs the marvelous facade, *wenāř*, of the original triple house.

Some facts indicate that the three modules of Amir Mohammad's house were built simultaneously; for instance, the opening between the rooms b and b_2. One thing is, however, certain: the *last* thing to be built, the wooden gallery, was built in a single process, as the sill is one enormous piece of timber, from the left corner of the building to the right corner, in all approximately 17 m (60 ft) long and also so high that it reaches from the floor to the under side of the sill of the "window"-
Fig. 111 & 112 openings; this latter timber is also in one piece right across the whole building.

In my opinion one of the more noteworthy features of this type of houses is the direction in which the roof beams lie, namely at right angles to the front wall, which is at 90° to the direction we have seen in the Waigal area, and – what is perhaps more interesting when regarded from an historical and evolutionary point of view – at 90° to the direction Robertson describes when he writes: "From the lateral walls of the apartment two large beams cross over..." (p. 486).

The first reliable evidence I have found of the building traditions used in Amir Mohammad's house is Wolfgang Lentz' photograph of a house under construction
Fig. 103 in Kamdesh in 1935 (Deutsche im Hindukusch, 1937: Abb. 113). Only the two lateral beams are seen here, but they continue far beyond the front wall of the *amō*, and although the two middle beams (to be supported on the four hearth-pillars) are not yet in place, there seems little doubt that the house is intended to eventually have a roofed-in verandah, a roof to be supported by the same beams as the roof of the *amō*.

The floor in the "verandahs or open wooden galleries" that Robertson saw, were "supported on long wooden pillars", not enclosing a building, so there do not seem to have been store-rooms under the verandahs in Robertson's time, as can still be
Fig. 104 seen for instance in Ktiwi. So before the store-rooms under the verandahs became a common feature it was realized that there were advantages in having a firm bond between the *amō* and the verandah, to prevent the verandah from becoming detached and falling away down the cliff (ed. note: we are in an area with frequent earthquakes and tremors), and that this could be achieved by having the beams traverse both *amō* and verandah.

Amir Mohammad's house is built without the use of *pik'ü* and *nakurä*, but

Fig. 103: A house under construction in Kamdesh. Note also the four module house in the background, belonging to Mohammad Afzal. (Cf. fig. 122 which shows the same house consisting of five modules in 1948.) Photo: Wolfgang Lentz, 1935.

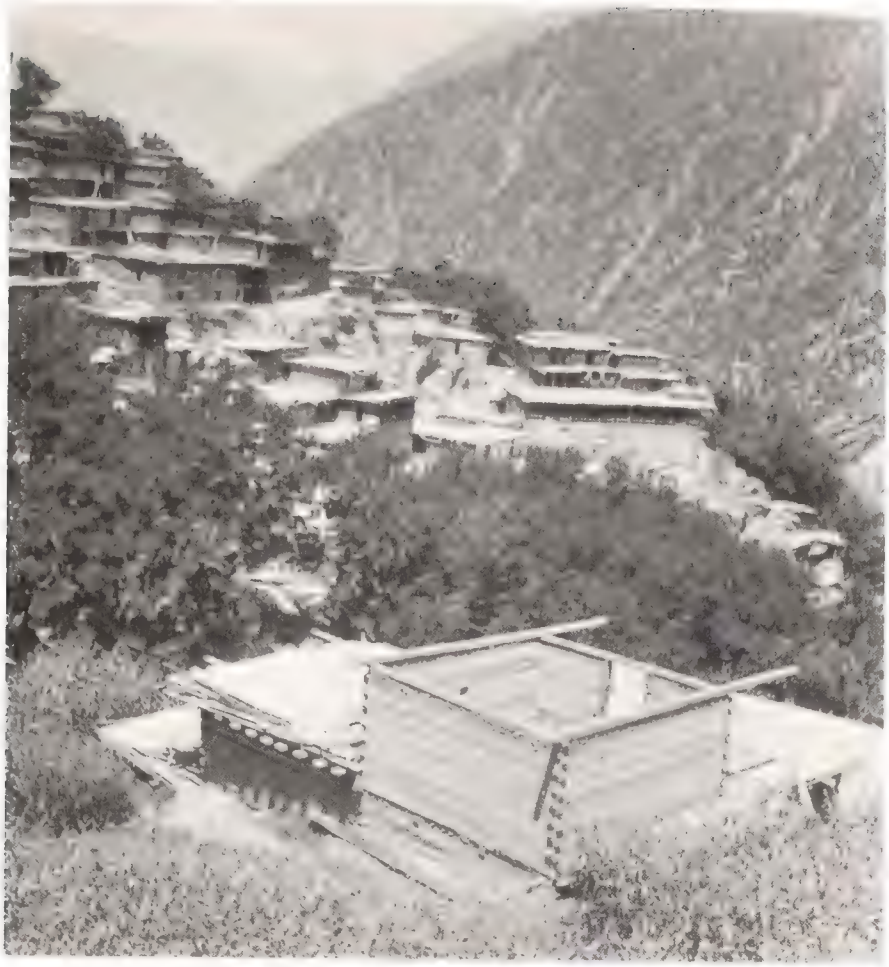


Fig. 104: Ktiwi, or Kantiwo, in the West-Kati region. Photo: L.E. 1948.

several of my photographs from the same village show that this type of wall is used in other houses. One could therefore be tempted to suppose that the *pik'ū-nakurä* wall was formerly used, but strangely enough, Robertson does not mention it. Said Ghulam stated that in such walls there should be two sets of *pik'ū* for each three *štümbələ* of wall.

Amir Mohammad's triple house was shared between his relatives in the following way: the part recorded was occupied by himself and his younger son. The elder (presumably married) son had the middle *amō*. The part that was to the far right Amir Mohammad's father's brother had at his disposal. This is how my informants explained it to me, particularly Khan Mohammad, the son-in-law. Apart from this, I noticed that the daughter, (Khan Mohammad's wife) performed most of her cooking activities and child-minding in the part of the gallery that was in front of the *amō* I was permitted to survey – a permission that was especially extended by Khan Mohammad. This leads me to suppose that the daughter also had a certain right to use the left part of the house, but I think she and Khan Mohammad slept in the corner building (the new extension). This might be due to the fact that Khan Mohammad, as already mentioned, was a school teacher in Bagalgrom and therefore not very often in Keshtagrom, whereas his wife was needed to help in the fields around Keshtagrom. Once when I gave her a silver-plated teapot she hurriedly took it into the left-hand *amō* – and probably hid it down in the store-room.

Amir Mohammad's *amō* is three *štümbələ* on each side, approx. 5.5 × 5.5 m (18 × 18 ft). In each wall there are 8 pieces of horizontal timber, *makř'ik*, if the head and sill pieces are included – they do not differ much from the others. They are trimmed with a long handled adze, and are slightly jointed together (i.e. halved) in the corners, *gēḍi*, so making frames, eight in all, upon and between which the masonry is built. These frames are approx. 23 cm (9 ins.) apart, and the walls are 13-15 cm thick (5-6 ins.). The clay plastering on the outside is intentionally rendered only on the masonry (and not on the wood surface), whereas on the inside the whole wall is rendered, much as we do in some places in Europe when whitewashing over the timber framework.

cf. Fig. 100

The door, *du*, is made of one piece of wood, measuring 2.0 × 0.72 m (6'6" × 2'4"). The door is not actually hinged but made to revolve on pivots projecting from the upper and lower edges, respectively *d'u-siŋ* and *d'u-kṭə*, set into sockets in the doorframe. The sockets are just behind the left panel (as seen from outside) flanking the door and therefore only visible from the inside.

Fig. 106

The lower socket is just a hole in the threshold, *d'u-kař'ū*, which is a seperate piece of wood 1.17 m long (46 ins.), reaching across the door and door-panels and presumably tee-halved into the uprights flanking these. These uprights go right from sill to head, and are presumably likewise jointed. The head of the wall serves as a door lintel, *d'u-c'eř*. In the under side of the lintel a notch has been cut opposite the socket. A corresponding notch in the upper part of the door has been cut just inside the pivot, so that when the door is opened at right angles to the front wall, these two incisions are aligned, enabling the door to be lifted up and out of the lower socket whereupon it can then be removed from the upper socket.

cf. Fig. 49

Let me go back to the doorstep, *d'u-kař'ū*. It is placed 23 cm (9 ins.) above the sill, leaving approx. 14 cm (5½ ins.) to be filled out with rubble; but in this space there are also wedged two small pieces of wood, below where the doorjambs normally are, at right-angles to the doorstep, and flush with the wall on the inside though slightly protruding on the outside. The one to the left has a socket in it for a

cf. Fig. 18

half-door, the one to the right is apparently just to rest the half-door on when it is closed. Halfway up the left door-jamb was a sort of loop of leather, intended for attaching the top side of the half-door to the jamb. The half-door itself, *mutu-du*, was, however, missing.

Fig. 106 and front cover

When closed the door can be fastened by two wooden bolts, *dic* (= tongue), which are made to run easily in two grooves cut in the door, and thence into sockets in the door-jamb. The bolts have vertical slots about 1½ cm deep cut into them. The key-hole, Keshtagrom: *dogundruk*, is between these two bolts, and seen from inside, it is in the middle of an hour-glass shaped depression, which allows the "key" more freedom of movement. The key is a bent twig about as thick as the top of a little finger. It is bent back in such a way that it somewhat resembles a pot-hook; it can be pushed through the keyhole, turned upwards and downwards, and the end can be made to catch in the bolt slots, so pushing the bolts back and unlocking the door. The necessary manoeuvring of the key has marked the smoke-covered door, with the keyhole at the centre of the circles. A little below the bottom bolt a depression has been cut in the door, slanting slightly upwards, to serve as an inside doorhandle, Keshtagrom: *barekṣadra*.

Fig. 105: A key such as the one described from Keshtagrom. It was collected by L.E. in Kushteki and is now at Moesgaard Museum (inventory no. EA 99B-2).

cf. Fig. 25

There is a little window, *duw'ok*, in the lateral left wall. It is closed by a wooden shutter turning on pivots.

In the centre of the *amō*, at each corner of the square hearth, are four wooden octagonal pillars, *štyü*, with a diameter of 14 cm (5-6 ins.) at chest height, broader at the top and tapering downwards, rather slender and undecorated. They stand approx. 1.8 m apart (6 ft.) and support two large beams, *wugřə*, B: *ařg'u* or *uglə*, that rest on the back wall and continue past the front wall and on over the wooden gallery. The left and right pair of pillars each stand on two beams, *guškunə*, which are 2 m long (6½ ft.) and laid down flush with the floor level.

Across the roof beams lie 10 planks, *aštrə̄-garə*, B, and Keshtagrom: *ašteərə-kaṭə:* the first and tenth of top of the head are flush with the wall and run the whole length of the room, three *štümbələ*, as do the rest, apart from the fifth and sixth, which leave the hearth square uncovered. The third layer of the roof-construction, *křum*, is a larger number of wooden slabs, *bit'elə*, Keshtagrom: *lucəri*, (?) laid side by side, each spanning the gap between two *aštrə̄-garə*, so forming the first compact layer of roofing. The spaces on top of the beams and between the *aštrə̄-garə* form numerous little shelves, frequently used for putting things on (or squeezing them into) such as bowls, axes, bows and arrows, etc.

According to information from *baris* in Keshtagrom, the *bit'elə* are covered with a layer of wood shavings, *tac'ə̄rī*, about two fingers thick. (Georg Morgenstierne was told that a layer of plants (leaves or straw), *yüs*, was put on top of this). On top of this come a few inches of pulverized rock, *pal'ol* or, Keshtagrom: *pal'āl*, (Persian: *xāk*), which is easily come by when preparing the site for a new building. On top of *pal'ol* comes a two-finger thick layer of clay, *mřī*, – this is still according to the *baris* of Keshtagrom; I, however, found it to be thicker. (I will come back to the eaves and the draining of the roof when describing the outside of the house).

The smoke-hole[16] is over the middle of the hearth, *ar'ō*, B: *aṭä*. It is about 18 cm square (7 ins.) and is enclosed by boards that project 5-7 cm (a few inches) above the roof-level. The ceiling between the four hearth pillars is built up according to

16. In Keshtagrom I was told that the smoke-hole was called *duak*, and trap-door *duk*, which presumably both correspond to the term Georg Morgenstierne was given for the little window, *duw'ok*. Nevertheless I find this unconvincing – surely three entirely different openings should have three different names.

Fig. 106: From the amō *of the house recorded: the door leading out to the wooden gallery. Behind it hangs a griddle used for baking bread on. An axe lies across the beam above this. The corner of a bed can be seen to the right. Note the spot of light on the floor: sunlight through the smoke hole.*

Fig. 107: The ceiling above the hearth square, showing how the 'lantern' design leads up to the smoke hole. The top part of the door and its 'hinge' is also seen. Photo: L.E. 1964.

the "lantern-type" design, which is based on wooden squares, Keshtagrom: *peliŋya-bit'elə*, being placed diagonally within each other; here there were four layers. The space between the bottom part of the 'lantern' and the *wugřə* or *aštərə-kaṭə* is filled out by boards set on edge, which form a frame for the "lantern" to rest upon.[17]

I mentioned that there were two beams, *guškunə*, set in the floor under the pillars – these bound the left and right sides of the hearth square. The front (and perhaps the back) sides were set off by a slightly raised ridge, 1-2 cm high (barely an inch).

The height of the room from the floor to the underside of the *wugřə* is about 2.33 m (nearly eight feet).

In the corner to the left of the door we find the traditional trap-door that, via a step-ladder, gives access to the store-room below. The frame of the trap-door is made of boards on edge which rest on the *bit'elə*-layer of the *amō*'s floor.

Outside the three *amō*, which are each 3 × 3 *štümbələ*, is the wooden gallery, *paṭ-kəřü*, which is closed on all sides except the front. *Paṭ-kəřü*[18] is 2 *štümbələ* wide.[19] The roof is supported by the framework of the structure and by a row of pillars down the middle of the verandah. All these pillars rest upon a single very long timber, *guškunə*, laid down in the floor, which ends just beyond the pillars, i.e. it is not connected with the lateral walls.

Fig. 108

The verandah pillars are placed in line with those inside the *amō* and with the walls between the *amō*. The pillars, *štyü*, consist of an undecorated base that rather resembles an up-side-down truncated cone, a shaft decorated with a plaited pattern[20] *gaṣṣiŋ* (= ram's horns), and a spherical capital, *štyü-ṣɛi*, also decorated, and provided with two "ears", *karməri*, Keshtagrom: *štyü-kar*. The "ears" slot up into the beam, *seř*, Keshtagrom: *ceř*. The *seř* is supported by eight pillars in all; it does not quite reach as far as the lateral walls and is made of two pieces of timber that are joined over the sixth pillar. The *seř* is elaborately carved on the front- and under-sides. A nearly cubic block of wood, *kuṇə*, has been fitted in between the *seř* and the *wugřə* – thus all the roof-beams, *wugřə*, are supported down the center-line of the gallery.

Editor's note: *Seř* only carries its own weight, its main function being to stabilize, connecting all the pillars as the *guškunə* also does.

17. Quote from Edelberg, 1974:
'Lantern type ceilings', which were never meant to be used as smoke holes, were popular as decoration in may parts of central Asia from the caves of Bamian and Tun-huang (Wang Hsun 1956) to the ornate ceiling in the Hall of Supreme Harmony in Peking (Shen Tsung Wen – Ao En-Hung 1957).
18. If the verandah is without a roof it is called *paṭ-krum*. Perhaps the term *paṭ-kəřü* corresponds to the Waigali: *krö*, which is the wooden gallery of a *kantār kōt* (see chapter III).
19. With reference to two (nearly identical) articles, both called: "Nuristan's Cliff Hangers", by S. I. Hallet, 1973 and S. I. Hallet and R. Samizay, 1975: my observations definitely differ from those of the authors, who state that the depth of the verandah is the same as the depth of the *amō*.
20. On fig. 108 and 109 a horizontal line can be seen about 12 cm (5 ins.) above the base, and about the same distance below the capital, intersecting the pattern. I did not notice this while measuring, and am afraid I cannot give any explanation for them; my other photographs show that they are to be found on all the pillars. At first I thought the length of the pillars had been increased here, but I did not really believe that the roof had been raised. Then I noticed that they also appear in Mohammad Afzal's quintuple house in Kamdesh – so they are most likely an integrated part of the pattern; the pillars are not cut through here; what we see is just a groove round each column.

Fig. 108: The row of pillars down the middle of the verandah. They stand on the guškunə *and support the* seť. *At right angles to the* seť *lie the roof beams,* wugřə. *Note also a very fine horned chair. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Ed.'s note: There is a similar row of pillars in West Berlin, in Das Museum für Völkerkunde, (where the seť, *however, is sawn into sections, presumably to facilitate transportation).*

Fig. 109: Detail from the wooden gallery: the top of a pillar, the seť, *and the roof beams. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Finally, the roof beams are supported by the front wall, *w'enāř*, which is one of the most sophisticated technical achievements of Nuristani carpentry.

In Amir Mohammad's house the *w'enāř* is 17 m long (approx. 60 ft.), corresponding to three times three *štümbələ*. What I am about to explain is a source of wonder to me: on the wall lies a sill, on top of which is a dado, and these two are made out of *one* piece of wood, roughly 60 cm (2 ft.) high and 17 m (60 ft.) long. On top of this lies another member forming a sill under the "window" openings, which is also a single piece of timber.

The *w'enāř* is not only intricately carved, but the carpentry is, from a constructional point of view, very cunning and complicated – almost too complicated to explain in words. But let me try: the bottom sill is higher than it is broad, seen in section; at intervals of a *štümbələ* (under the centre of each opening) the carpenter has not adzed away the wood right into the back of the dado, *ačli-kunə̄*, but has let a broad rib remain on the inside, strengthening the dado, which is otherwise trimmed down to only 4 cm (1½ ins.) thickness. The sill is not decorated, but the dado has "wheels" and plaited patterns carved on the outside. On top of this lies the next sill, B: *wakṣ'ō-kaṭə*, Keshtagrom: *w'enāř-kaṭə*, also decorated on the outside. But how is it kept in place? Under each roof-beam, one *štümbələ* apart, slots about 4 × 50 cm (1½ × 20 ins.) have been chopped out of this sill, 10 holes in all. Underneath these, notches of the same size have been made in the bottom sill. The openings in the facade are separated by so-called "plank-columns", *bitəl-štyü*, 10 in all, and the bottom back part of these, the "plank" part, is passed through the slot in the top sill and comes to rest in the notch in the bottom sill of the *ačlikunə̄*. But these *bitəl-štyü* also continue down on the front side, tapering

Fig. 111

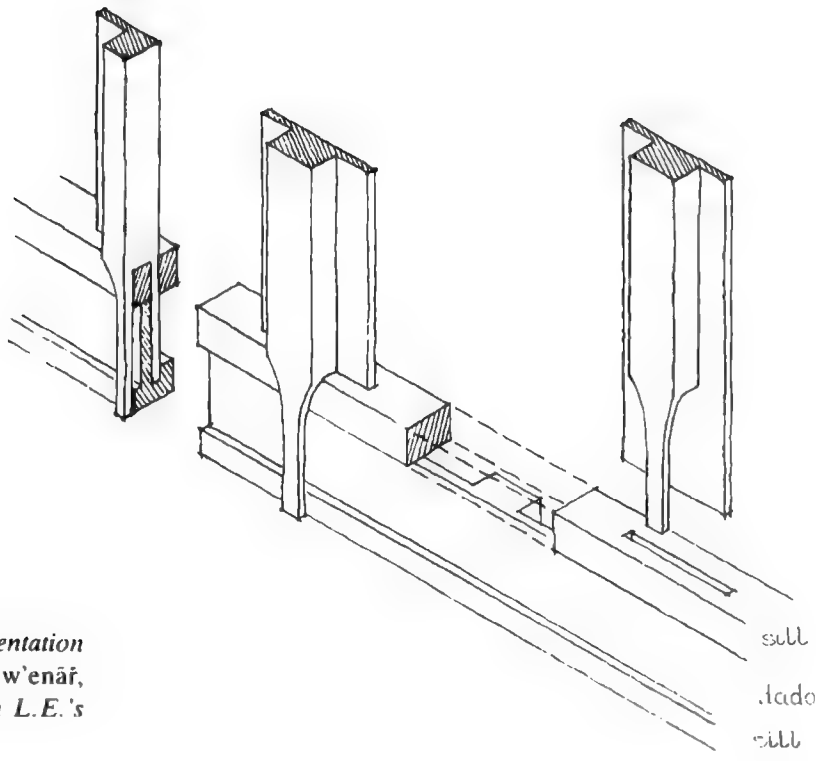


Fig. 110: Schematic presentation of the construction of the w'enāř, *drawn by the editor from L.E.'s sketches.*

Fig. 111: The w'enâř *seen from inside the wooden gallery. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 112: The w'enâř *seen from outside; the right-hand corner of the building. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 113: The entrance to the wooden gallery through the end wall on the right-hand side of the building. The pivots that the door rotates on are clearly seen, as is also the keyhole, the bolts and the 'handle'. The lid on the floor in the foreground covers a hole that opens onto the privy below. Photo: L.E. 1964.

downwards over the front of the upper sill, across the dado, and over the bottom sill in a "beak" about 65 cm (26 ins.) long. Thus the *bitəl-štyü* straddle the entire *w'enāř.*

Likewise up under the roof: the top, back part of each *bitəl-štyü*, (the "plank" part), is fitted into a notch in the underside of the long head, while the front part, (the "column" part), holds the head in front. The head, *cer,* B: *cac'ər* (?), supports all the roof-beams, *wugřə,* and is decorated on the outside. The extreme left and right openings are kept permanently closed with large, elaborately carved panels, hewn from a single piece of wood.

All the roof beams (including the lateral ones which are really heads on the *amō* walls) run from the back walls of each *amō* to the front wall of the gallery, *w'enāř,* and project about 0.5 m (20 ins.) beyond this, each one above a *bitəl-štyü,* which has carvings that represent effective, if grotesque, animals heads.

Fig. 102 Through the end of each beam a peg, *agəc-katə,* has been inserted, slanting slightly outwards, to support a plank on edge, *piy'ō*, Keshtagrom: *piyā-kulā,* that terminates the previously described layers of the roof, *křum.* The *piy'ō* is made in two sections that meet over the sixth beam from the left. The surface of the roof must be very slightly sloping towards some of its corners (not to be seen on the working drawings). A drain-pipe, *wuẓ'ol,* is placed in the right hand, front corner of the roof. It is made from a slender pole and leads the water a suitable distance away from the walls, which definitely do not stand up to water.

The end wall of the gallery to the left, the one outside the surveyed *amō,* had undergone some alterations in connection with the building of the corner house, so I will describe the other, righthand end wall. In it there was a door flanked by a

Fig. 113 panel on either side, inserted between two load bearing columns. The door is hung in the same way as the one between the *amō* and the gallery; it also has a keyhole, bolts and a "handle". It is 1.75 × 0.6 m (5'9" × 2'0") and is thus both shorter and narrower than the one opening into the *amō.*

This is due to the construction of this wall: this sill is presumably a continuation of the sill in the *amō,* (but I neglected to investigate this) and the next timber is placed closer to the sill than normal, and serves as a threshold for the door. I do not know how it was connected with the *amō.* The next three wall-timbers are

Fig. 102 & 114 joined to the corresponding ones in the *amō*-wall by halving. At the other end they are joined, probably by mortice and tenon, to the upright next to the door-panel. Above this, is a panelled wall. Four vertical wooden panels, three of them quite broad, are tightly fitted together in grooves in the top-side of the sill and the under-side of the lintel. The latter is also the lintel over the door; above this comes the usual space filled in with masonry and then the head, which is the same piece of timber as that which forms the head on the lateral wall of the *amō.* Above the head the spaces between the seven *aštrā-garə* are also filled in with masonry. The panel on the *w'enāř* side of the door is made of one piece of wood.

Fig. 113 & 115 At either end of the wooden gallery in the clay floor of the corner-*štümbələ* is a hole covered with a wooden lid. Squatting over this hole, one can relieve oneself.

Fig. 116 Under the hole, in the lower storey, is a big heap of *Quercus baloût* leaves.

The beds, chairs and other household effects are moved around quite a bit during the day – and during the year. There are also some moveable benches, *ǰē-kunə,* placed alongside the front wall of the verandah by the "window" openings.

The store-room (B) under the *amō* is not as deep as the *amō:* the distance from

cf. section the back to the front wall is just over two *štümbələ.* The front pair of pillars stand

Fig. 101 rather accurately under the *amō* pillars. The one to the right stands on a stone; the

Fig. 114: The wall at the far right-hand end of the wooden gallery. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 115: The verandah with carved pillars, seen looking towards the entrance at the left end of the gallery. Here one or several families can make themselves comfortable and have a chat. The cradle is actually a basket for carrying all sorts of things on one's back. One can just glimpse the beam over the pillars, the seť, *and under them, in the floor, the* guškunə. *On the floor beyond the woman is the lid over the privy. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 116: The privy, room b *on Fig. 101. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 117: From the store-room B, looking towards the lateral wall, the wall that is the left, lateral wall of the whole building complex. Note also reused wood in the ceiling: a bit'elə *that has previously been exposed to fire. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 117

floor is filled in with earth on top of the bed-rock and behind these four pillars the rock becomes visible. The back pillars stand on the rock itself and just behind them the back wall (of stone) is erected. The room is barely 2 m high (6 ft. 6 ins.) in the front and 1.65 m (5 ft. 5 ins.) in the back. Between the front pillars a little beam runs under and at right angles to the roof beams. It is settled into a notch in the pillars. In the left-hand wall there was a little peep-hole (not on my plan, but just visible in the photo) and a *pik'ū-nakur'ä* arrangement[21] to brace the wall, presumably because the corner lacks carpenter's joints.

There is a door between the store-rooms B and b, constructed in the usual way. The sill serves as threshold and the head as lintel, but as the store-room walls only have seven pieces of timber, B: *makř'ik,* Keshtagrom: *dud-katə*, head and sill included, while the *amō* has eight, this door is only 1.8 m (6 ft.) high.

21. In Keshtagrom I was told that *pkyu* was the horizontal wooden slab with two holes in, and *katə* was the upright, but as Waigali has *pik'ū* for the upright, I must have exchanged the two terms.

In the lateral walls the sill is continuous from B to b, as is also the 6th timber from the bottom and the 7th, (i.e. the head). The ends of the *makř'ik* and of the roof beams are visible in the front facade.

The distance from the bottom of these roof beams to the bottom of the enormous *ačlikunə* is 52 cm (20 ins.). I took this measurement mainly to be able to judge the thickness of the floor between the store-rooms (B and b) and the living quarters (*amō* and *paṭ-kərü*). Between the head on the store-room wall and the sill of the *amō* wall there must lie another *makř'ik*, the end of which is visible in the front wall above the seven ends of the *makř'ik* that can be seen from inside the store-rooms. This piece of wood is completely embedded in the floor. The store-room, b, has two pillars placed under the corresponding pillars in the gallery. Between these pillars and the roof beams a transverse beam is lodged, as in store-room B. Another beam right across the room rests on *makř'ik* no. 3, and passes just behind these pillars. This beam is rather flat; a ladder, *ċik*, leans against it. When squatting on the beam one can relieve oneself upon the same heap of leaves mentioned earlier on.

Fig. 102

cf. section Fig. 101

From the store-room b one can pass into store-room b_2 (which is situated in the middle of the house) through an opening enclosed by the sill, a stud, *makř'ik* no 6, and the wall. The *makř'ik* nos. 2-5 are probably tenoned into the upright (indeed the mortice for no. 3 went right through the upright), which is probably in turn tenoned into *makř'ik* no. 6.

Along the right-hand wall of store-room b_2 was a cupboard or chest resting on two horizontal poles that were inserted into the wall just above *makř'ik* no. 4. The other end of these poles was joined by mortice and tenon to two vertical posts that were set in the floor.

Fig. 118

In the front wall of store-rooms b and b_2 there were, respectively, two and three tiny windows, built in between *makr'ik* no. 5 and 6.

Fig. 102

The construction of the corner building – the newer extension – was very straight forward, but I did not examine how it was joined together with the main house. The photographs show that the floor in the corner-room is lower than that of the *paṭ-kərü*, but I do not recollect stepping *down* into the former. Maybe the platform between the extension and the house (from which one gained access to both), was the same level as the extension, so that one stepped *up* into the *paṭ-kərü*. The corner building is supported by eight long pillars that rest upon a sill, – a square frame – that lies along the edges of a little stone-built foundation. Here, in the shelter of the room above, fire wood was stored.

The foundations of the main house consist of a terrace built out in front of the bed-rock. This becomes manifest in the store-room B. The foundation is made of *pal'ol*, crushed rock, supported at the front and lateral sides by a stone-built wall, Keshtagrom: *čā*, and does not enclose any storage space. This foundation is not the work of the *bari*.

The reader will have noticed that I have followed Sir George Scott Robertson's description, often quoting him, in my survey of Amir Mohammad's house from the Lower Bashgal. I have done this partly to show that in many respects the houses of today look as they did in Robertson's time, and partly to emphasize the changes they have undergone, or to emphasize some features that Robertson might not have gone into.

Fig. 118: From the store-room b_2. Quotation from Robertson, 1896: "On the rare occasions when I have been permitted to enter a storeroom in Kafiristan, I have more than once noticed a cupboard fixed on a shelf some distance from the floor". The planks in the roof bear traces of having been exposed to fire. They might have been salvaged after the fighting in 1929, when Keshtagrom was burnt (mentioned in the beginning of this section). Photo: L.E. 1964.

A single and a quintuple house in Kamdesh, Lower Bashgal

Fig. 122 & 135
Fig. 120 (colour) & Fig. 121

My expedition in the summer of 1964 was essentially devoted to the surveying of buildings. From the 10th of July, 1964 when we entered the Waigal Valley, to the day we left the Bashgal, we had exactly one month at our disposal. It takes quite some time to get from one valley to another, especially from the Waigal to Parun and from Parun to Bashgal, and it also takes time to find the building to survey. (Which building will I get permission to measure, and will it be suitable for my purpose?). So the actual measuring and recording was often performed under strain; we were tired and pressed for time.

In Keshtagrom I had seen double and triple houses being built, where the modules they consisted of – "mono" houses – were constructed in one and the same operation, but I had not been able to find such a "single" house.

We wanted to use our very last fieldworking day in 1964 in Kamdesh. After having been very cordially received by Mohammad Afzal in his quintuple house – the biggest building in Nuristan – we set out to find a "single" house, and we succeeded. I only recollect finding one, but from my photographs I can see we found two – we were so very tired.

Fig. 119: Looking down over a part of Kamdesh Village and down the Bashgal River. Some of the stones and boards seen on the rooftops are smokehole covers. Haystacks drying and stacks of firewood are also to be seen. In several instances roof beams have been left jutting out in front of the dwelling, waiting until the owner can afford to build a covered and partly closed gallery. Note also two 'drainpipes' leading off roofs to the far right. Photo: S.J. July, 1960.

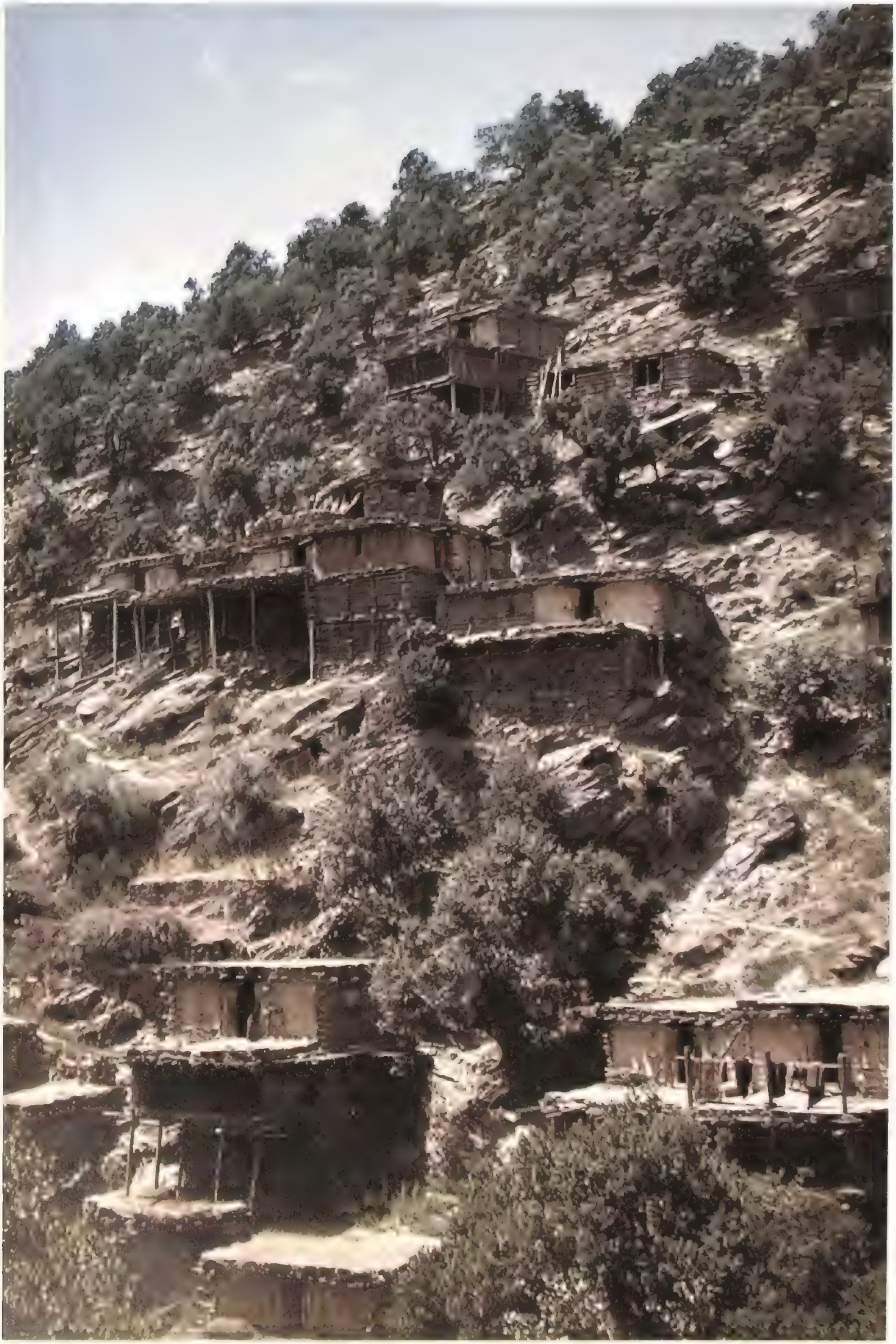


Fig. 46: Ghulam Haidar's house is a little to the left and above the house in the centre of the picture. It can also be seen, still 'unfinished', in the centre of the previous picture, taken in 1970. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 99: From the Lower Bashgal Valley: a part of Keshtagrom, (the village continues to the left of this picture). Keshtagrom was said to have been burnt down in 1929, and to have had about 250 houses in 1949. The recorded house is in the middle of the picture. A photo from 1960 shows it without the 'extra' room (on stilts, to the left), and on a photo from 1970 the opening in this room has been equipped with a door. This additional room, used for receiving guests in, is becoming more common. Several houses have been completed with wooden galleries. The bari *quarters are seen in the bottom right-hand corner. Abdullah Wakil's complex lies below the recorded house: the open verandah is used for weaving, the* āma *lies above this, and the smithy underneath (see fig. 44). Photo: L.E. 1964. This picture has previously been published in Edelberg & Jones 1979.*

Fig. 120: Kamdesh: a 'single' house – the basic element of Nuristani dwellings. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 144: Ptsigrom from the north, 29 October, 1970.
Ptsigrom is the innermost settlement of the Shkorigul Valley. Situated on the riverbank at an altitude of 3100 meters it is one of the highest hamlets in all Nuristan. Beyond it are a few stables in outlying fields, and then the valley seems to stretch on for another 20 kilometers till it ends in mountains rising above 5000 meters, with permanent snow and glaciers. To pass this way from the Shkorigul Valley into the Parun Valley, "one night and two days" are required, according to informants.

Ptsigrom is the only village of the Shkorigul that Robertson mentions by name. On his map it is placed east of the river; today the village occupies mainly the western bank. The floor of the valley widens here, partly due to the opening of a minor tributary valley from the east, out of the photograph to the left. From this valley several streams join the river, both fields and watermills making use of their waters. The river is spanned by several bridges.

In spite of the on-coming winter no storage of hay and straw was seen stacked on roof tops in Ptsigrom. The livestock may be kept in outlying stables, and this traditional arrangement may support the idea that Ptsigrom is the oldest, and previously probably the only, settlement in the Shkorigul. This again is consistent with Robertson's few pieces of information on the area.

As is the case in all Shkorigul the cultivable areas have been carefully cleared of all moveable stones, and they have been collected in tidy heaps. Above and in between the fields are stony and sparse pastures. The crops include wheat, barley and a little millet; the apple trees observed below Ptsigrom are not to be found here. Willows and poplars and a few birches are still to be found, but they are approaching their limit of growth. The keeping of cattle, goats, and poultry makes up the ever shorter list of items in the subsistence economy.

Fig. 147: The enclosed verandah of the surveyed kantar kōt *in Berimdesh (Waigal). This picture is taken looking in the opposite direction of fig. 157. The wall of the* āmā *is to the left, and an entrance door is seen in the background. The finely carved pillars are topped with capitals representing rams' heads with twisted horns. In front of the man in the centre is a* bāšpē *and behind him a bed. The man to the left has a goatskin jacket on. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 158. Waigal. Some roof-tops of the lower town, Be[illegible] [illegible]. Photo: L.E., September, 1953

Fig. 182: The village of Pashki. Four towers are to be seen, and also the wall Ram-yü between the two upper towers. A closer view of the wall and two towers is seen on fig. 79. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 231: This barn is from the Tsamgal valley and can also be seen in fig. 18, Edelberg & Jones, 1979. It has two storeys, a verandah in front, and a pitched roof over the hayloft. The barn is probably used as summer living quarters – this is convenient when the fields are far away from the village. A patch of cultivated land (maize?) has been fenced in to keep out grazing livestock. The settlement lies on the borderline between coniferous and deciduous trees. Photo: L.E. July 10, 1970.

Fig. 121: Another 'single' house from Kamdesh. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 122: The quintuple house of Mohammad Afzal, Kamdesh. Photo: L.E. 1964. This house is also shown in fig. 103, taken in 1935 by Lentz, when it consisted of only four modules or 'single' houses. Cf. also Edelberg & Jones 1979: pictures nos. 2, 3 and 113.

Some constructional details from the Lower Bashgal

Editor's note: This chapter on Kamdesh was never finished. In addition to the two previous chapters concerning the Lower Bashgal Valley, L. E. also left some notes and reflections upon architectural photographs from that area. The following section is based on these.

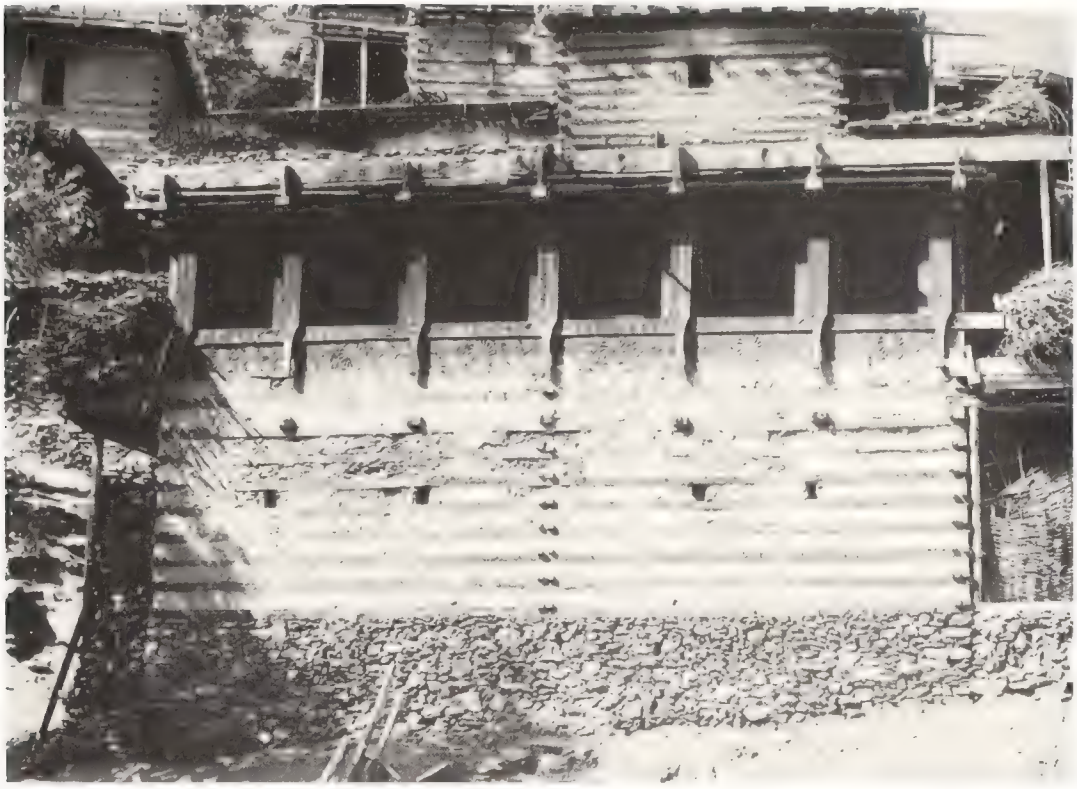


Fig. 123A: Two double neighbouring houses from Keshtagrom, one complete (left) and one under construction (right). The new house will consist of 3 storeys: the lowest is 7 wooden frames high, the middle is 9 wooden frames and the top storey will presumably be also 9. The middle storey has carved decorations, kuli-katɔ, *across the whole front wall. The roof above this serves as a verandah,* pat-křum. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 124: A double house from Kamdesh. Photo: L.E. February, 1949.

Fig. 123B

Fig. 125: An enlarged detail of figure 123 B shows the kuli-katɔ, *the window and an interesting detail of the roof: the eaves have been constructed by inserting a little beam next to the main roof beam. When the house is completed with an enclosed veranda,* paṭ-kərü, *the front wall of the veranda, the* w'ɛnāř, *will be constructed and the eaves shown on the picture become unnecessary and are removed. But why not just let the roof beams project from the wall and shorten them later on? I suppose it could be because one economizes with long pieces of timber, or it could be a relic from times before the saw was introduced into Nuristan – if one were to shorten the beams with an axe the vibrations might damage the masonry. The lintel and sill of the windows are formed by the timbers in the wall, B:* makř'ik. *The styles are presumably morticed into the* makř'ik. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 126: A house of 4 štümbələ *from Keshtagrom. The right-hand bay is distinctly the broadest. The fascia-board,* piy'ō, *B:* yāšto *of the roof is decorated – the bottom edge has a "tooth" pattern. The roof beams penetrate the fascia-board instead of supporting it. The lower storey has a* pik'ū-nakur'ä *wall. A fine log-ladder, B:* šiř'i. *Two elegant drainpipes project from the roofs. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 127: Keshtagrom. The left-hand wall of an amō. *No wooden gallery has been made, nor are there preparations for one, such as projecting roof beams over the verandah. A smoke-hole is seen in the roof; it is surrounded by boards and a lid rests up against these. The* kuli-katə *is* 2½ *courses high. The store-room wall has one* pik'ū-nakur'ä *stabilizer. Access to the open verandah,* pat-křum, *is gained via a log-ladder,* šiř'i. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 128: Kamu (east of Kamdesh). From the gallery of Hadji Mohd. Akbar's house. The pillar is square and has 4 "tassels" under the spherical (undecorated) štyüṣei, *which has "ears",* karməri, *Keshtagrom:* styü-kar. *These hold the beam,* seř, *but are not let into it. The* karməri *in picture 109 are let into the* seř *(on the front side visible in the photo, but only partly let into* seř *on the back). I have recorded a pillar exhibited in the public gardens, at Paghman near Kabul, from 1949. It is very similar to the above: both ears are decorated on 3 sides, showing that they must have grasped the beam* seř, *and were not slotted into it. Photo: S.J. 1960.*

Fig. 129: A doorway leading to an amō *in Kamdesh. The door and the flanking panels are richly decorated. This is not very common in the lower Bashgal. The half-door has been worked upon with an exceptionally broad adze. The pillars have different shapes in various sections and are decorated. The "ears" hold the roof beam that crosses from the back to the front wall, i.e. the direction usually seen nowadays. This means that here we have an* amō *with elaborately carved pillars, as described by Robertson in 1896, but the beams do not follow his description: they do not rest on the lateral walls. The boundaries of the hearth square can just be seen in the floor. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 130: The corner of a house in Keshtagrom. The bay on the far right seems to have been closed with a panel at some time (which is the usual practice) for the lintel is rabbetted (hardly visible in photo). The bitəl-štyü *(literally: plank-pillar) differ from the ones described in picture fig. 112, in that here the 'plank' part is passed throught the sill in front of the dado, and so comes to rest in a notch in the bottom sill. The sill of the lateral wall is slightly halved into the sill of the front wall; the far right* bitəl-štyü*'s 'beak' has for this reason had to be shortened. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 131: A w'enāř *from Kamdesh showing yet another variation of the dado. Here it consists of wooden panels. An arrangement for drying clothes and airing rugs is suspended under the eaves. Vertical poles are inserted between the last and the last but one rafters, presumably kept in place by a cross-peg. These poles (Kunisht:* ak'eco*) have a hole in their lower, thicker end, through which a long pole is passed. The* ak'eco *are decorated – they end in 4 "drops" or "tassels". There are a couple of similar* ak'eco *in the Kabul Museum, but, as far as I can remember, they do not have a hole through them – instead they end with a little hollow shelf on one side, meant for placing an oil lamp in, and so presumably intended for indoor use. Photo: SJ. 1960.*

Fig. 132: Bitəl-štyü *being reused in a novel way in the wall of a house in Kamdesh. They are decorated with "entangled horns", Waigal:* anṭala-siṇ. *I failed to check whether there was a* paṭ-kəřü *or an* amō *behind this wall and door. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 133: Kamdesh. Columns supporting a whole building. This building was not thoroughly investigated and many questions remain unanswered, but it is interesting to note that the columns are square in section even though this is not a mosque. Photo: S.J. 1960.

Fig. 134: The front wall of a house in Kamdesh, which illustrates variations from the usual pattern. In the first place it is 4 bays wide. Furthermore, the "entangled horns" end in two knobs that keep the head of the wall in place. A face seems to be suggested between the ram's horns and its "beard" or "beak". The 2 middle bays may *both have doors (leading to 2 different rooms?). The 2 lateral bays are closed with panels: an extra piece of horizontal timber just above the sill keeps them from slipping out of their grooves. In the foreground to the right: a smoke-hole? Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 135: The longest pat-kərü *in Nuristan: Mohammad Afzal's quintuple house in Kamdesh. This house is seen from the outside on fig. 122. Photo: S.J. 1960.*

Fig. 136: A fireplace on the pat-kərü *of a house in Kamdesh. The fireplace,* ar'õ, *B:* at'ã, *is located up against the front wall of the* amõ. *Behind the tripod lie 3 firedogs,* kür, *B:* kyur, *made of soapstone. The slightly convex griddle leaning against the wall is for baking bread. A fine pre-Muslim "horned" chair stands beyond. In the far background: the corner of an imported cupboard, made at a joiner's workshop. Photo: S.J. 1960.*

Reconnaissance in Upper Bashgal

By Torkil Funder

Editor's note: It was originally Lennart Edelberg's suggestion that Torkil Funder, also a teacher of geography and biology in Ribe, Denmark, should make a reconnaissance of the Upper Bashgal and the Shkorigul Valleys during his one month's stay in Nuristan in 1970. This resulted in a solitary one-week walk, in October, from Bragamatal to Ptsigrom and back via Ahmad Diwana Baba/Badawan. In the following section Torkil Funder gives an account of some of this observations from this journey.

Lennart Edelberg had planned to go to the area, but he was never granted the opportunity. Not many people have travelled there, and to our knowledge very few photographs have been published from this region, (cf. fig. 191).

The uppermost part of Upper Bashgal, the Shkorigul, is given little notice in Sir George Robertson's book on Kafiristan from 1896. He mentions that he was taken there in August 1891 by his friend Karlah Jannah (p. 336ff), but gives no actual description of the area. He mentions the village of Ptsigrom as being a fort-village (cf. quoted at the end of chapter V) and includes it in his map. And he refers to "– the new hamlets springing up in Skorigul –" (p. 497). That is all.

The background of Torkil Funder's journey must be kept in mind. It was a short visit intended to be a reconnaissance, and the traveller had no interpreter, no extensive knowledge of the Afghan Dari language, nor did he have special insight into the architecture of Nuristan. The text is therefore of a general character.

Bragamatal lies at an altitude of less than 2100 meters above sea-level, and Ptsigrom, 45 kilometers further up the valley, lies at an altitude of 3100 meters. This difference in height, corresponding to a decrease in temperature of 5°C., has many consequences for the subsistence economy of the villages, and thereby also for the character of the buildings. This is the line of thought followed in the text.

Fig. 137: Aftsai. Upper Bashgal Valley, 27 October, 1970. *This village lies 2½ hours walk north of Bragamatal, where the road ended in 1970, and all traffic beyond this point had to be on foot or on horseback along winding paths. The evergreen oak trees, still plentiful on the lower slopes around Bragamatal, gradually become smaller, stunted, and scattered, and finally disappear near Aftsai which lies at an altitude of 2400 meters.*[22] *The coniferous trees here grow on the lower slopes, and near the river dense thickets of willow appear.*

The houses in the photograph showing part of the village are on the western bank of the Bashgal river. Robertson in his map places the village on the eastern bank, and the houses there are evidently older, larger, and several of them have elaborate carvings on heavy timber. The mosque shown in fig. 171 is also situated here.

A meticulous foundation work, employing the pik'ū-nakur'ä *construction method, has been necessary to establish the extension of the village on the western bank. The river is spanned by a bridge out of the picture to the left.*

The houses shown have no carved decorations, but the methods of construction resemble those of the lower Bashgal valley, e.g. the halved corners and the "striped" appearance of the timber and stone work.

In contrast to the houses on the east bank the newer houses here have no closed verandahs, but there are preparations for one in the upper right-hand corner. The main roof-beams lie at right angles to the front wall.

22. Distances measured in hours of walk are given as recorded by T.F.; the figures therefore in most cases exceed what could have been the average for a Nuristani. Distances in kilometers (as the crow flies) and heights above sea-level have been taken by approximate measurement from the map:

"Afghanestan 1:100.000, sheet No. 506A (ed.1), Barge Matal, compiled by Fairchild Aerial Surveys, Calif., USA, by stereo-photogrammetic methods ... Executed for the Ministry of Mines and Industries. Royal Government of Afghanestan.".

The aerial photography for this map is dated Oct. 1957, Sept. 1958, Oct. 1959. Date of issue not given.

The cultivated area and the numerous scattered fruit trees are mainly in the open rather level area where a tributary valley from the south-east reaches the Bashgal; this possibly also explains the original position of the village.

At this time of the year all fields have been harvested; according to local information wheat, millet, and maize are cultivated here. The fruit trees are walnut, mulberry, apple, and apricot. Grapes cannot be grown above Badamuk south of Bragamatal. Fruit trees may play an important part in the nutrition and economy of the village. At Aftsai most fruits are dried, and only walnuts are sold. One walnut tree may yield 70-100 kg. nuts, sold here at 15 Afghanis per kg. (1970), to be transported to Bragamatal, where lorries take them out of Nuristan. At Kamdesh far down the valley the price has gone up to 35 Afghanis per kg.

Fig. 138: Pshuwor, 31 October, 1970.
To the traveller many of the houses of Pshuwor give an impression of neglect and outward poverty which is not seen further down the valley. Some of the inhabitants have however, at least previously, been able to make use of large building timbers. Probably they were obtained from forest areas down towards Aftsai, where large coniferous trees are to be found.

The photograph shows a "double house", that is 6 bays wide, four of which are seen in the photograph. The constructional details are in the same style as those from the lower parts of the Bashgal valley.

This house, and the mosque which has beautiful carvings, were the only houses seen in Pshuwor to have decorations and to be built in the manner of the larger houses of the lower Bashgal area. According to observations made on this reconnaissance they are also the last decorated and heavy-timbered houses up the valley.

Fig. 139: Winter stable south of Pshuwor, 27 October, 1970. *At Pshuwor (Robertson's map, Pshui) the Bashgal valley turns north-west and becomes wider with a U-shaped profile. Near the village the floor of the valley is well cultivated with low-terraced, irrigated fields, and scattered in them are many outlying winter-stables. The Nuristani word, "šāl", (Robertson, "pshal") should probably be used for these buildings, but it seems mainly to signify the stables and pens of the summer-pastures in the mountains.*

According to local information the cattle are stabled and fed here from the first snows around December 1st until April, when they are led to the mountain-pastures for the summer. In early October the cattle are back in the valley to graze on the harvested fields and river-pastures and, if necessary, fed outdoors for another two months.

South of Pshuwor some winter-stables built of solid wood were seen, but the building in the photograph is typical of all stables north of Pshuwor. The materials are uncut stones and clay with a minimum of wood employed.

The open area in front of the stable is used for threshing and drying. Hay and straw for winter fodder is stacked and tied down on the roof to be kept free from ground-moisture and out of reach of the cattle. Firewood for the approaching winter is scattered around; a bundle still tied up leans against the right corner of the building. To the left of it is a wicker-partition for the stable.

An old woman is resting on the bank of an elevated irrigation channel. Another younger woman has hidden in the house, leaving two children and a conical basket full of firewood outside. Some pumpkins are on the ground to the left of it.

The river is in the background, surrounded by willows. There is a sparse growth of coniferous trees on the dry lower slopes.

Fig. 140: Pshuwor, 27 October, 1970.

Pshuwor in several ways seems to mark a boundary. South of the village there are still large coniferous trees to be seen on the lowest slopes, but near the village they rapidly diminish in size and number, and beyond it they disappear. The slopes then carry only a thin growth of juniper-bushes. Along the river-bed dense thickets of willow and poplar continue.

Pshuwor also seems the last village where the cultivation of maize, walnut, and mulberry is possible.

The village lies at 2550 meters, but apart from this modest increase in height above sea-level these sudden limitations may be caused by the widening of the valley and its turn towards the north-west. It now becomes exposed to cold winds coming down from the great heights beyond Ahmad Diwana Baba. A possible decline in the annual precipitation must also be taken into consideration, as well as a decreased ability of the denuded slopes to retain moisture.

This change in natural vegetation and in the possibilities for cultivation becomes more marked further up the valley. But already here at Pshuwor it may be one of the reasons for most houses being simple structures without any outer decorative carvings. The protruding beams seen in one of the dwellings in the picture may, as is common further down the valley, have been left in expectation of the later addition of a small closed verandah. The novel-looking door and window to the right may be noted; in 1970 they were rarities in this area.

The fact that these houses are built on the fairly even ground of the valley floor makes the general system of construction and communication different from that of the villages on the steep mountain-slopes. To the passing observer the village seems strangely flat, widespread, and with little variation in level.

Fig. 141: Auzuk, Shkorigul Valley, 28 October, 1970.
At the village of Ateti the Shkorigul Valley, running from the south-west, meets the Bashgal Valley. The village of Auzuk is 2½ hours walk from Ateti.

The mountain slopes are mostly barren, but above Ateti occasional growths of small, thin birch-trees appear on the eastern slopes, especially in ravines along minor contributary brooks. On the western mountainsides the vegetation of scattered juniperbushes that started above Pshuwor is gradually replaced by hawthorn (?). At Auzuk the bed of the river lies at an altitude of 2850 meters, the village being 200 meters above it on the western bank.

The stone-structure in the immediate foreground of the photograph is used as a horse-pen. The poles in it, mostly birch, may be for constructional purposes as well as for firewood. The rather coarse building above the pen may be for forage and for stabling the horse in wintertime. Men on horseback carrying goods are frequently seen above Bragamatal. At Gunjelukshal further up the Shkorigul even a game of buzkaschî, *the favourite horse game of the Afghan lowlands, was observed during the celebration of a wedding. According to information the horses are bought in Badakshan (Minjan) beyond the mountains north of Ahmad Diwana Baba.*

To the right of the people standing on the roof top is an amō, *and behind them is a separate building with one room for sleeping and one for storage. Being built mostly from stones and clay the dwellings have lost the "striped" appearance produced by the exposed timbers typical of the houses in the lower villages. The walls of some houses have been rendered with clay which must have been applied thickly to produce the smooth surface.*

Some of the houses seen have fascia boards that, considering their size and the materials available here, must have been brought up from lower regions at some cost. In other houses simple poles, probably birch, have been used for the same purpose. Considering such facts and others too lengthy to be mentioned here, the group of buildings described may, despite their humble looks, be judged one of the wealthier of the village.

Below the houses to the left are several apricot trees; they were not observed growing beyond Auzuk. One of the houseowner's wives lies buried under them, another wife and some of the children stand beside him outside the doorway of the amō.

The dry and stone-strewn slopes above the village are barren except for clusters of juniper and hawthorn (?). It is early morning, and the clouds are still lifting.

Fig. 142: The Shkorigul Valley from above Gunjelukshal towards south-west, 28 October, 1970.

The Shkorigul has a fairly narrow V-shaped profile. It is in its entire length directly exposed to the winds from the great heights above Ptsigrom. The villages of the valley are all situated on the western slopes, thus obtaining the most favourable exposure to the sun.

The cultivated areas are mainly near the river, where the gradient has been reduced by large deposits of material broken down from the slopes above. The willows, solitary or planted in rows along the curves of the landscape in the fields, and especially above the cultivated area, are a prominent feature.

The trees are pollarded so as to produce long straight branches and osiers for building, fencing, and wicker-work. Furthermore, the leaves of the trees may create new soil and retain moisture, and even more important their roots may, together with the sparse vegetation and pasture, prevent landslides from destroying the fields below.

In contrast the eastern slopes are characterized by such slides, and they are barren except for thin borders of birch along the moist ravines of small tributaries.

The roofs of the village of Gunjelukshal, with a person standing on one of them, are to be seen as light coloured expanses among the trees in the center foreground. The number of houses was estimated to be twenty, all rather small and neatly built from stones, mud, and poles. No hewn timber was actually seen. It is characteristic that many dwelling-houses have hay and straw stacked on the roofs, a practice not previously observed. This may denote some lack of winter stables. In the village itself there were stone walled cattle pens, and 4 or 5 outlying houses seen in the photograph may well be winter-stables.

In the fields wheat, millet, and perhaps barley had been cultivated, the fields being irrigated from a system of channels starting from small tributary streams above the village. Near the river and on either side of it are stony pastures, and on the far side narrow footpaths used by livestock and people converge at the bridge on the left.

Fig. 143: Permanently inhabited winter-stables south of Loluk, 29 October, 1970.
Originating from one or several outlying winter stables, šāls, this locality is now becoming a permanent habitation, the only one east of the river in the Shkorigul. It seems a natural course of events in Nuristan, that when larger extensions of the cultivated area become necessary for one reason or another, certain outlying šāls grow into new settlements.

The present hamlet of Ateti at the mouth of the Shkorigul was, according to local information, until 1950 šāl-area. The name of the village of Gunjelukshal may denote a similar development. In all Shkorigul there are many outlying buildings; they have the coarser architecture of the winter stable, but many seem to be permanently inhabited. Generally this condition may suggest a rising population.

The photograph has been taken looking downstream. In the left foreground is the main path of the valley running along the western bank. Behind the bridge are some of the old poplars common beyond Gunjelukshal. Originally planted, they have been pollarded for many years. On one of the roofs are three storage bins for grain, and the cattle have come down for the winter.

In materials and appearance the stables do not differ much from the dwelling-houses of the villages; further down the valley the difference is much more pronounced. It is evident from the picture that the houses occupy considerable areas of arable land, and future buildings will probably be placed on the stony slope to the right.

The house on the river bank is a mosque; the niche in the wall curving in the direction of Mecca is faintly visible. The mosque emphasizes that this locality is achieving an identity of its own.

Fig. 145: Ptsigrom, 29 October, 1970. *(See also colour photo of Ptsigrom fig. 144).*

The availability of timber for building purposes reaches its minimum here. Wherever feasible, stones and clay are used in combination with rough poles. However, a single hewn board is visible in the roof just above the woman.

She is carrying a goatskin of flour back from the watermill at the river, walking up a flight of stones that has replaced the notched tree-trunk ladder of other villages.

A bed is seen to the right, pieces of cloth are being aired. The first snowstorm of this winter came yesterday. At 5:30 in the morning the temperature was −4,5° C., and now at midday the surface of the ground is frozen wherever the sun cannot reach.

Ptsigrom is the innermost village, but nothing is really different here. The children play with enormous crystals of garnet and quartz, and their fathers use them as weights. Otherwise the possibilities have been reduced – by elevation, temperature, and isolation. The valley stretches on, but there is no village beyond Ptsigrom. Given the nature of the economy and the environmental conditions, none are possible.

Fig. 146: Badawan from the north, 30 October, 1970.
To the north-west of Ateti stretches the Suyengal Valley. 1½ hours walk from Ateti up this valley at an altitude of 3000 meters lies the village of Badawan at the edge of an open marshy plateau, where the river divides into several streams. Badawan (Ahmad Diwana Baba), like Ptsigrom in the Shkorigul Valley, marks a point beyond which there is no habitation. The valley continues till it reaches mountains rising above 6000 meters. They form the watershed of the central Hindu Kush mountains, and they are the northern demarcation of Nuristan; the passes here at nearly 5000 meters lead into Badakshan.

Robertson mentions Badawan several times. He visited the stronghold of the outlaw Karlah Jannah there and gives the impression that at that time, in 1891, it was the only habitation there. He also mentions the frequent communication between the Bashgal Valley and Badakshan (Minjan) via the passes above Badawan, and a similar communication with Chitral via passes above Pshuwor.

In 1970 the inhabitants of Pshuwor and Ateti told of the goods they buy in Chitral; in Auzuk they told of buying horses and finding pieces of lapis lazuli in Badakshan, and at Ptsigrom they gave the information that from there it is "one night and two days to Badakshan" (Minjan), and "two nights and three days to Chitral".

To the passing traveller from a country very different from Nuristan, villages like Ptsigrom and Badawan may seem isolated ends of cultural diffusion. But to the inhabitants these "innermost" settlements are parts of an ancient network of communication, that may be even more alive today than in previous times of feuds and general distrust and enmity.

The photograph looks down the valley from Badawan. The sun has left the valley at 3:15 p.m. Three hens are looking for food. There is a cold wind blowing.

III: Kantar kõt in Waigal Valley and the Ashkun region

Homayun Khan from Bergele [Part of Waigal village, also called Berimdesh] was the first person to draw my attention to a particular type of house called *kantar kõt*. We had spent most of the 20th of July, 1964 together, and during the evening he mentioned that there was a certain house-type I ought to become acquainted with. I was due to start for the Parun Valley next morning, via the Jauda Pass, but before we left, he led me to the *kantar kõt* in Bergele. As the verandah in front of the *ama* was covered by a roof and had a row of window openings in the facade, I at first thought it had been influenced by the building style of the Bashgal valley, where houses are ultimately completed with an enclosed verandah. This assumption is, however, not tenable, as more recent enquiries (Jones 1974: p. 130; Jones 1975: p. 153-155) have shown that a *kantar kõt* is not just an ordinary dwelling that anyone may build. It serves – and also previously served – certain social and presumably also religious purposes.[23]

In August 1970 a *kantar kõt* was pointed out to me in each of the following

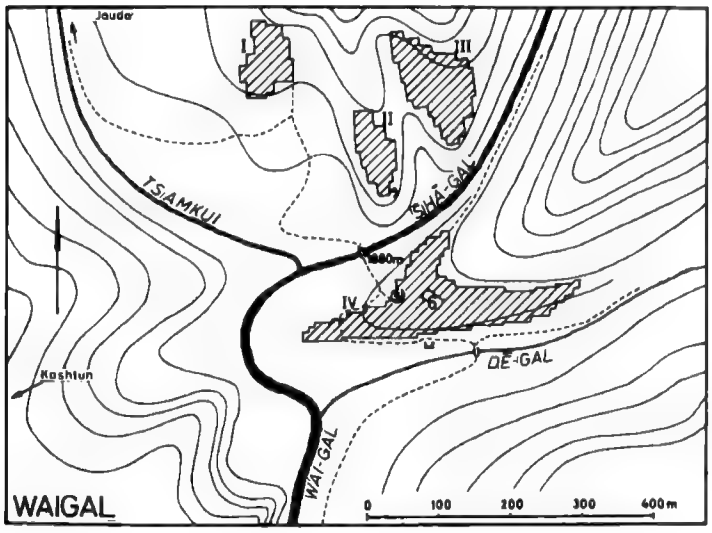


Fig. 148: Map of Waigal Village (copied from L.E. 1965, Kuml, fig. 20)
Waramdesh, upper town, consisting of:
I Kandruk, 40 houses
II Chünesh, 20 houses
III Öly'a, 200 Houses (3 of these are bari-*houses)*
Berimdesh or Bergele, lower town:
IV 300 houses (9 of which are bari-*houses).*
The mosque in the lower town is shown by a moon and star.
The mosque in the upper town is not indicated.
6: Open space
Ed.'s note: From L.E.'s text it can be concluded that Perinta consists of (at least?) II and III.
See also fig. 158 (colour) from Berimdesh.

23. When Homayun Khan and his friends showed me the *kantar kõt*, I remember them telling me that the term indicated something to do with – or in – the sky, but I did not note it in my diary. Georg Morgenstierne states (1954) that Lumsden, when he met some Kafir slaves in Kandahar some time before 1860, was informed that *Káantaar* was the name of a god. (Lumsden, Sir H. B., *Mission to Candahar*, 1860). This is also applies to Norris, who spells it *Kantaur*. His information originates from T. Villiers Lister, who met a Kafir woman in Teheran before 1862. (Trumpp, Rev. Ernest, *On the Language of the So-called Kafirs of the Indian Caucasus*. The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. 19. London 1862). On these grounds I suppose one may assume that these *kantar kõt* were dedicated to a certain god.
On the 18th (?) July 1970 I was led to a *kantar kõt* in Zhönchigal, in the Let-deri part of the village, and while I was being shown over the enclosed verandah a terrible thunderstorm broke out and the rain came pouring down. The river below the village quickly rose so much that its roaring was audible right up in the village. "*Az katr-i kantar kõt!*" my companion exclaimed: "This is because of (our visit to?) the *kantar kõt*". We hurried down to our camp. It had been washed away and all our food-stores were lost.

villages: Perinta, Bergele [both are part of Waigal], Zhönchigal, and, with the help of field glasses, Ameshdesh and Nisheigram. Schuyler Jones states (Jones 1975: p. 154) that not only each village but also each clan appears to have its own *kantar kōt*. This seems to be confirmed by similar information from Parun (Motamedi & Edelberg 1968: p. 9 & 11). Furthermore, the picture from Perinta shows a *kantar kōt* (or at least a house resembling a *kantar kōt*) in the part of Perinta called Öly'a, while the other pictures are from a *kantar kōt* I examined quite closely, and which lies in a different part of Perinta, namely Chünesh. This in turn gives rise to the question whether, for instance in a village like Zhönchigal, there are perhaps one or two more *kantar kōt* other than the one pointed out to Schuyler Jones and me in the Letderi clan's area of the village (Edelberg 1965: p. 168).

Fig. 149

Fig. 150 & 151

Circumstances in July 1964 prevented me from measuring the *kantar kōt* in Bergele, but when I returned to Waigal again in 1970 – this time approaching from the Nechingal Valley via Tsamgal – my first task was to survey and record this *kantor kōt*. I was told that in the meantime it had been restored, but at a glance, I could not see any major alterations. This *kantar kōt* is a rather complex "double" house, and as there was no person present who could be responsible for maintaning peace and quiet while I was surveying, I was only able to measure the house to the right (as seen from outside, looking at the front wall of the *ama*). It was also in this same *ama* that I had taken most of my interior photographs in 1964.

Fig. 155 & 156

The following drawing is not quite reliable, the *ama* itself is correctly shown as being askew, but the angle of the verandah, compared with the front walls of the *ama,* is partly guessed from the photographs.

Fig. 152

Fig. 149: Perinta, Öly'a; part of the upper town of Waigal. The kantar kōt *L.E. mentions in the text is seen on the left, three houses up from the bottom of the picture. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

Fig. 150: Perinta, Chünesh, in the upper town of Waigal: a kantar kōt. *Photo: L.E. 1970.*

Fig. 151: The gallery of the kantar kōt *seen in the previous picture from Perinta, Chünesh. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

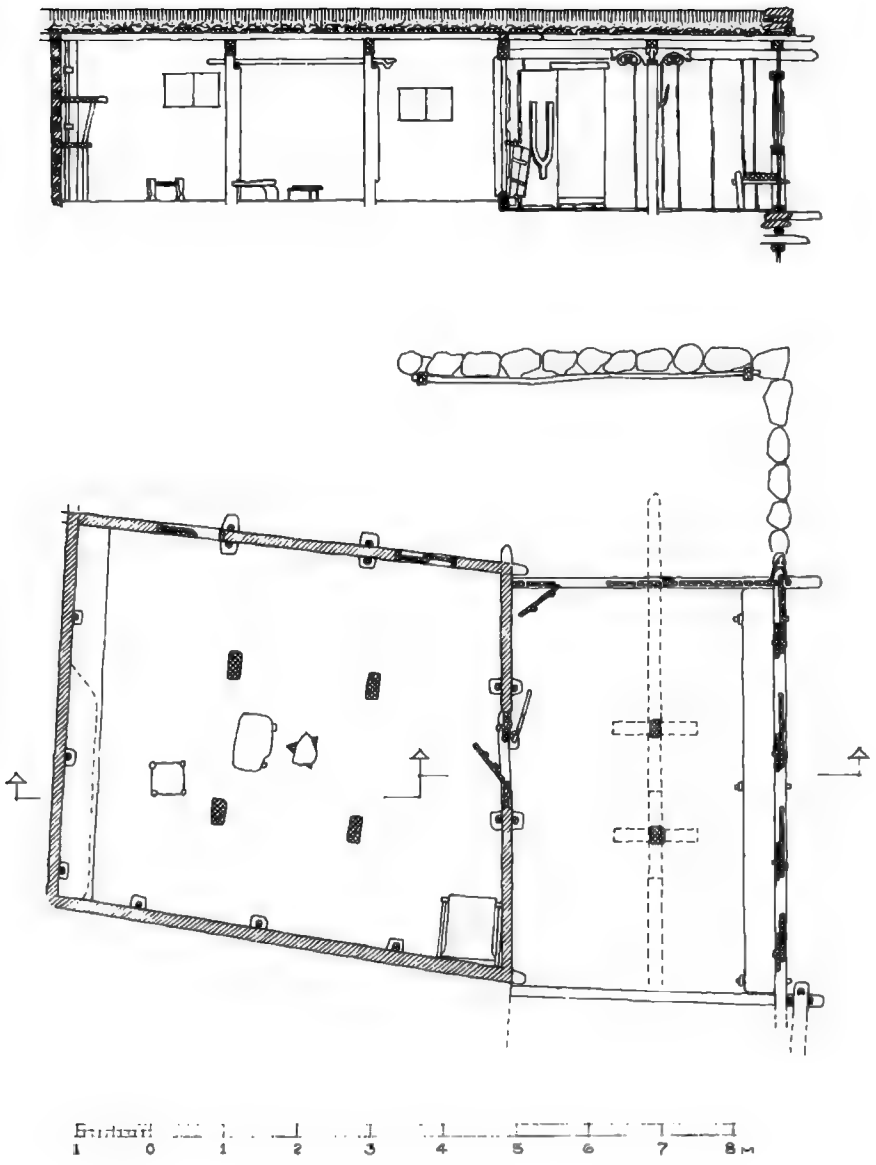


Fig. 152: Working drawings of the kantar kōt *in Bergele, lower town of Waigal, drawn by the editor on the basis of sketches and measurements taken by L.E. on the 14th of July, 1970. Photographs from this building are fig.s: 155-157, 159 and 147 (colour).*

Editor's note: These pages, a selection of photos and a rough sketch, is what L.E. left on the subject of *kantar kōt*. The working drawing is copied from the sketch by the editor.

Kantar kōt

By Schuyler Jones

In Waigal Valley if you stand on a mountain slope opposite a village and spend some time observing the form and structure of the houses, you will soon notice one or two buildings that appear quite different from the rest. A closer examination, however, reveals that these houses are actually built to the same basic plan as an ordinary dwelling, and their very different appearance is the result of a feature that has been added: the verandah in front of the *ama* has been enclosed.

This has been done by extending the roof of the *ama* out over the verandah as far as the outer wall of the *berim-ganja*. This roof is mainly supported by a row of wooden columns running parallel to the front wall of the *ama* and standing midway between that wall and the outer edge of the verandah. Such buildings are called *kantar kōt* in Waigal Valley. The principle of enclosing the verandah in this way to form a gallery (Wg. *krö* or *berim-ama*) is, as we have seen, the rule rather than the exception in the lower Bashgal Valley, but in Waigal Valley and the Ashkun area, such buildings are not only rare, they played a very special role in the pre-Muslim culture. Before saying anything about this special function, it should be noted that the enclosed verandah is not the only distinguishing feature of a *kantar kōt*, though it is the most prominent. The columns in the gallery which support the verandah roof are very different from those found in an *ama;* in particular, they are adorned with large and strikingly ornate capitals. Also, along the outer wall of the enclosed verandah, the wall opposite and parallel to the front wall of the *ama*, is a built-in bench running the length of the room below the window openings. Another point to be made about *kantar kōt* is that, unlike some of the buildings described in this book, they all date from the pre-Muslim period. They were in fact 'clan-houses' and were the residence of the head of the clan and home of the clan 'spirit' (Wg. *paṇā / pr̆ā̆ṇā*) or supernatural being which looked after the prosperity, fertility, and general well-being of clan members. This spirit or deity was represented by a wooden statue placed, according to informants, in the *ama* behind the second pair of columns between the hearth and the back wall of the room. This space, even in the *ama* of an ordinary house, is culturally very significant and there are strict rules about its use (See Siiger 1956: p. 28; Jones 1974: pp. 103-106, & Jones 1981: pp. 156-158).

Fig. 154 & 147 (colour)

Fig. 157

Fig. 159

It should also be noted that *kantar kōt* are often 'double houses', i.e., the enclosed verandah extends across the front of two *ama* and stands on top of two *berim-ganja*. As has already been described for the lower Bashgal region, the 'single house' exists there, but the most common dwelling is the 'double house'. In this respect houses in the Waigal and Ashkun areas differ markedly from those in the lower Bashgal, for here the single house, consisting of one *ama*, one *ateram-ganja*, and one *berim-ganja*, is the rule rather than the exception. As a man's sons marry, they may, space permitting, construct their houses next to the parental home so that in time a kind of terraced row of two, three, four or more houses develops, producing in effect the same pattern we have observed in the lower Bashgal. What these multiple houses lack in Waigal and Ashkun is the kind of communal space that joins separate dwellings together in the lower Bashgal: the enclosed verandah. The principle is, of course, well known to *bari* craftsmen in Waigal and Ashkun; they employed it in the construction of *kantar kōt* where the

enclosed verandah is needed for a meeting space. But it is never found on ordinary domestic dwellings in these areas.

In Zhönchigal on August 27th, 1969 Mohd. Amin had this to say about the *kantar kōt* which belonged to his brother: "It is the oldest house in Zhönchigal. In Kafir times the gods were called *kantar,* [see Morgenstierne 1954: p. 319: "*Káantar, Kantaur,* of a god."] This *kantar ama* or *kantar kōt* was the shrine. *Kantar ama* means 'holy house'. This one was built by Wai Diŋ of the Let deri [lineage of Let]. Wai Diŋ's son was Ara Diŋ. Ara Diŋ's son was Ülust. The son of Ülust was Mogul Kan. Mogul Kan was my father. In this house in the Kafir time important decisions were made. Agreements made in this house at sunrise were binding. They came here to make important decisions and agreements because this was a holy place" (S. J. Field notes).

Fig. 153: The Kantar kōt *built in Zhönchigal by Wai Diŋ of the Letdari six generations ago. The enclosed verandah sits on top of an extended* berim-ganja. *This extension (toward the camera) provides an open verandah running along the side of the* kantar kōt *and, at the same time, provides access to the enclosed verandah itself. The house immediately beyond the* kantar kōt, *its verandah railing just visible on the left of the picture, belongs to Mohd. Amin, brother of the present owner of the* kantar kōt. *Mohd. Amin, a retired army officer, was killed fighting the Russians near Chagha Serai shortly after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

Fig. 154: A close-up of one of the capitals on a column in the enclosed verandah of the Zhönchigal kantar kōt. *The capital, formed of two pieces of wood, is carved to represent four highly stylized ram's heads. The square slot near the top of the column just below the capital was cut in the forest shortly after the tree was felled to provide a notch for dragging the timber down to the village; it is not meant to serve any other purpose. Note also the lattice-work above the windows. Photo: S.J. Aug. 1970.*

Enough information is now available to indicate that in pre-Muslim times in each village in Waigal, Ashkun, and Parun there were at least two different kinds of buildings with religious and social functions: one or more *kantar kōt*, according to the number of clans in the village, and a temple dedicated to Imra (Mara), the Creator (see Motamedi and Edelberg 1968, and Jones 1975).

Access to the *kantar kōt* is gained by going first onto the enclosed verandah, sometimes by means of a notched log ladder, *čēř, ṣəř*, or via the 'unsolved problem' – the triangular shaped 'bridge' that leads along one side of the *ama* to a corner of the verandah, but often by way of an open verandah along one side of the *kantar kōt*. The two end or lateral walls of the enclosed verandah, unlike the walls of the *ama*, are constructed of broad planks approximately 2 m long which are set on end and slotted into a sill below and a corresponding horizontal timber above. To form the entrance, three of these panels are carved with symbols of rank; the one in the centre forming the door (*dô*), and those on either side forming the door panels (*dô-pača*). The door is hinged in the same manner as has already been described for the *ama* of other buildings.

Fig. 156

Fig. 155 & 157

The long front wall of the enclosed verandah contains several window openings and is superficially similar in appearance to the corresponding wall on an ordinary house in the lower Bashgal. There are, however, some fundamental differences. In the first place, the window openings in the *kantar kōt* can be closed by sliding

Fig. 155: The Berimdesh (also known as 'Bergele' – the lower section of Waigal Village) kantar kōt, *showing the entrance to the enclosed verandah (upper left) and the overhang resulting from the fact that the enclosed verandah is longer than the* berim-ganja *below. The second, older,* kantar kōt, *the darker building just visible on the right, was surveyed and measured by L.E. in July, 1970. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

Fig. 156: The two kantar kōt, *built side by side, with the older building nearest the camera. It is the latter building that is shown on the working drawing. Like the Zhönchigal* kantar kōt, *we see here that an open verandah has been constructed along the side of the building, providing easy access to the enclosed verandah. Unlike the Zhönchigal example, this has not been achieved by extending the* berim-ganja *below. Instead, the verandah is propped up on poles and the space underneath, used as a store for firewood, has been left open. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

panels. In the second place, the way in which the front wall is constructed and the manner in which the vertical members are incorporated to take the weight of the roof is different.

Fig. 152 & 156

On the Berimdesh *kantar kōt,* which is actually two *kantar kōt* dating from different periods built side by side, a grooved sill runs the entire width of the building across the top of the outer wall of the *berim-ganja* and projecting out a short distance beyond the line of the lateral walls. Broad adzed planks approximately 2 m high and averaging some 40-50 cm in width have been slotted down into this sill, fitting closely together. Four window spaces have been created in this wall by the insertion of shorter horizontal timbers at regular intervals. The taller vertical planks are held in place by three timbers, each approximately eight metres long: the grooved sill mentioned above; a second slotted timber *through* which all the vertical timbers pass and which serves the double function of holding them in alignment and forming the sill of all four window openings; and a third timber which is grooved to take the tops of the vertical planks and serves as a head rail for the outer wall of the enclosed verandah. This last component provides a rest for the ends of the beams that support the roof of the verdandah so that, at its outer extremity, the weight of the roof is partly taken by the lateral walls and partly by the vertical planks between the window openings. These three long horizontal timbers project out beyond the lateral walls and are neatly aligned and held at either end of the building by poles driven down through square slots cut near their ends.

Fig. 155

The vertical panels that form this outer wall are for the most part plain adzed timbers, but viewing the building to the left from the outside, we see that the panel to the left of each window opening, four in all, has been made from a very thick plank and adzed down so as to leave a heavy rectangular rib running three-quarters of its length. Toward the lower end this rib has been undercut to slot down over the horizontal window sill – a feature similar to those found on houses in the Bashgal Valley. At the top end on each of the four panels this rib has been cut short to form a ledge for the head rail to rest on.

The enclosed verandah on this *kantar kōt* is, untypically, about one meter wider (as viewed from the front of the building) than the *berim-ganja* below. Two columns have been added to support the resulting overhang and the space below is partly occupied by a food safe built into the wall of the *berim-ganja*, where it enjoys extra protection from the weather. The rest of this sheltered area is a convenient space for stacking firewood.

Fig. 152

Close beside this *kantar kōt* is a second and older one, constructed in a similar manner and varying only in certain details. When the second *kantar kōt* was constructed beside the first, the end wall of the older enclosed verandah was removed to make one large verandah. Because the floor levels do not match there

Fig. 157

is now a step 25 cm high half way along the enlarged verandah – the remains of the original wall. In making this conversion the builder has fitted a matching verandah column on top of what is left of the original wall.

Of the two buildings it is clear that the one on the right is older because of the manner in which and extent to which the timbers have weathered. This impression is confirmed when we enter the verandah where we find very thick accumulations

Fig. 147 (colour)

of soot on the timbers of the ceiling which are not matched in the other half of the verandah.

The *ama* leading off from the enclosed verandah are built to the same plan as the *ama* in ordinary domestic dwellings.

According to informants, in pre-Muslim times these buildings were used for both secular and ritual purposes, though our separation of the two is to some extent arbitrary. Having made the distinction, however, it draws our attention to the manner in which *kantar kōt* are designed to provide two different kinds of space: an outer area (the enclosed verandah) where heads of households belonging to that particular clan could meet to discuss problems of mutual concern, and an inner more private area (the *ama*) containing the effigy of the clan 'spirit', where access was restricted, and where important rituals were performed.

Fig. 157: Interior of the enclosed verandah of the two kantar kōt *in Berimdesh (Waigal). The outer (front) walls of the buildings, with their built-in benches are on the left. There is a high step leading up from the old* kantar kōt *to the floor level of the newer building. This step is the base of the original dividing wall. Three of the sliding panels which close the window openings are visible toward the far end. The open door at the end of the verandah is the same entrance shown in the upper left hand corner of fig. 155, Photo: S.J. Aug. 1967.*

Fig. 159: The ama *from the* kantar kōt *surveyed in Berimdesh. Photo: L.E. 1970.*

Fig. 154 & 147 (colour)

The very large ornate capitals on the verandah columns are a striking characteristic of all important buildings made during the pre-Muslim period. A second characteristic is the enclosed verandah. This is confirmed both by Robertson's account (Robertson 1896: p. 389-395) and by the evidence of still existing buildings in Nuristan. This special 'temple style' of architecture has parallels elsewhere in regions to the east of present-day Nuristan and the tradition known as the North-West Indian style of medieval architecture may not be unrelated (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1959).

Fig. 160: A kantar kōt *(top centre) in the Ashkun village of Malil in Western Nuristan. Terraced fields in the foreground. Photo: S.J. Dec. 1960.*

In summary, then, *kantar kōt* are found in the Waigal and Ashkun areas of central and western Nuristan. They are easily identified as they are the only buildings in those areas (mosques excluded) which have enclosed verandahs. Today *kantar kōt* are used as ordinary domestic dwellings.

In a different region of Nuristan, in Parun, we find a special type of building locally known as *amal,* which in pre-Muslim times seems to have served the same social and religious purposes as *kantar kōt.* Lennart Edelberg has described one of these:

"In the middle of the village of Dewa is a house of assembly called *amal,* a square roofed building with a central pillar and benches along the four sides. The room is walled to the north, west, and south and open to the east; at the opening a flat stone has been placed on which the speaker stands.

"Outside the *amal,* to the eastern side, is an open place of the same size as the *amal* (4 × 4 metres). This place is called *ušüm-sagam.*

"At the north-eastern corner of the *ušüm-sagam* is a house belonging to a man of Pedei (Pod'ä)-tadba. This house is probably one of the village temples" (Edelberg 1972: p. 38).

From this description it would seem that, in Dewa at least, a "clan house", public meeting place, and temple have all been grouped closely together.

In Shtiwe Lennart Edelberg noted that there were eight 'clan houses' (though it is more accurate to call them *lineage* houses) and he went on to report that "...each of the eight clan-houses was at the same time the residence and... home of the

Fig. 161: The kantar kōt *seen on the previous picture, from Malil. The style of both houses and* kantar kōt *in the Ashkun region is similar to that found in Waigal. The main differences are in the way the buildings are finished. The builders of Waigal are careful to shape and align timbers more precisely and Waigali house owners seem more willing to commission extra work, such as carved symbols. The most striking feature of Ashkun villages is the lack of clay rendering on the outside of buildings; the timbers and stones used in wall construction remain visible. Photo: S.J. Dec. 1960.*

headman of the clan *and* the temple for a special god or goddess, the worship of whom was... performed there" (Edelberg 1968: p. 9).

From this it is evident that the *amal* of Parun is the direct equivalent of the *kantar kōt* of Waigal Valley. We thus assume, from the data obtained to date, that in pre-Muslim times in the Parun, Ashkun, and Waigal areas each lineage had such a house and that it was the residence of the head of the lineage and, at the same time, the place where the 'spirit' (Wg. *pan'a*, Ash. *pa'nau*) of the lineage was to be found in the form of a wooden statue.

This is perhaps as good a place as any to briefly mention the important role played in Nuristani village life by the council of elders. Social and political organization varies from one region to another, and sometimes even from village to village within the same region, so generalizations are always risky with regard to Nuristan, but there are some general patterns. We have already shown that *kantar kōt* in Waigal and *amal* in Parun, to give two examples, serve as a focal point for secular and religious gatherings of kin based groups, i.e., clans and lineages. At the village level, however, there is frequent need for the representatives of different lineages to meet and discuss wider issues, usually political matters. In many villages such meetings were held in the open at special sites. One of these, as yet unchanged from the pre-Muslim period, is to be found in Berimdesh, Waigal Village. The photograph shows a segment of the circle of stones that forms this meeting place. The stones themselves belonged to individuals of rank and there are stories which relate how famous warriors selected and carried their own personal stones down from the mountains for use as a seat at village meetings. As recently as the 1960's older men in the village could still walk round the circle and point out and name, stone by stone, the famous men of the past.

Fig. 162: Waigal Village, Berimdesh. The meeting place used by the council of elders, shown as no. 6 on the map, fig. 148. Photo: K.F. 1953.

IV: Mosques

By Schuyler Jones

Since the mosques of Nuristan have been built by *bari* craftsmen it is not surprising that these buildings are constructed of traditional materials, using traditional techniques, and are in the traditional style. In view of the fact that the people of these valleys were only converted to Islam at the very end of the 19th century, one might assume that all of the buildings used as mosques in Nuristan have been built since 1895. This is not the case. There is little doubt but that, in some instances, the 'new' village mosque occupies the old 'kafir' temple. The carved wooden anthropomorphic figures representing the deities were simply removed and burned and the temple became a mosque. In many cases, however, the old temple was not

Fig. 163: The mosque in Wama. We do not know when it was built, but it looks old. Quote L.E.'s notes: "Note the branch on the roof – according to my informant symbolizing horns of a cow." Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 164: The south-east corner of the Keshtagrom mosque during its construction in the summer of 1960. The large dimensions of the timbers can be clearly seen. Photo: S.J. 1960.

Fig. 165: The portico of the Keshtagrom mosque, looking from the south-west corner across to the north-east corner. Note the very large size of the transverse beam, that runs the entire width of the building. The dried grass spread evenly on the floor is collected fresh every few days in summer and brought to the mosque to serve as a clean floor covering. Photo: S.J. 1960.

located by a stream of water or a spring and so could not be used as a mosque. Possibly for this reason, some temples may have been dismantled and rebuilt elsewhere.

Where new mosques were built (and there is a good deal of evidence to show that in many villages the old temples were burned to the ground by invading Afghan troops) they turned out, not surprisingly, to closely resemble the temples they were replacing. That is, they had prominent porticos or open galleries where the roof was supported by large, elaborately carved columns capped with extravagantly ornate capitals. This was, after all, the correct style for important communal buildings which served to link the profane with the supernatural.

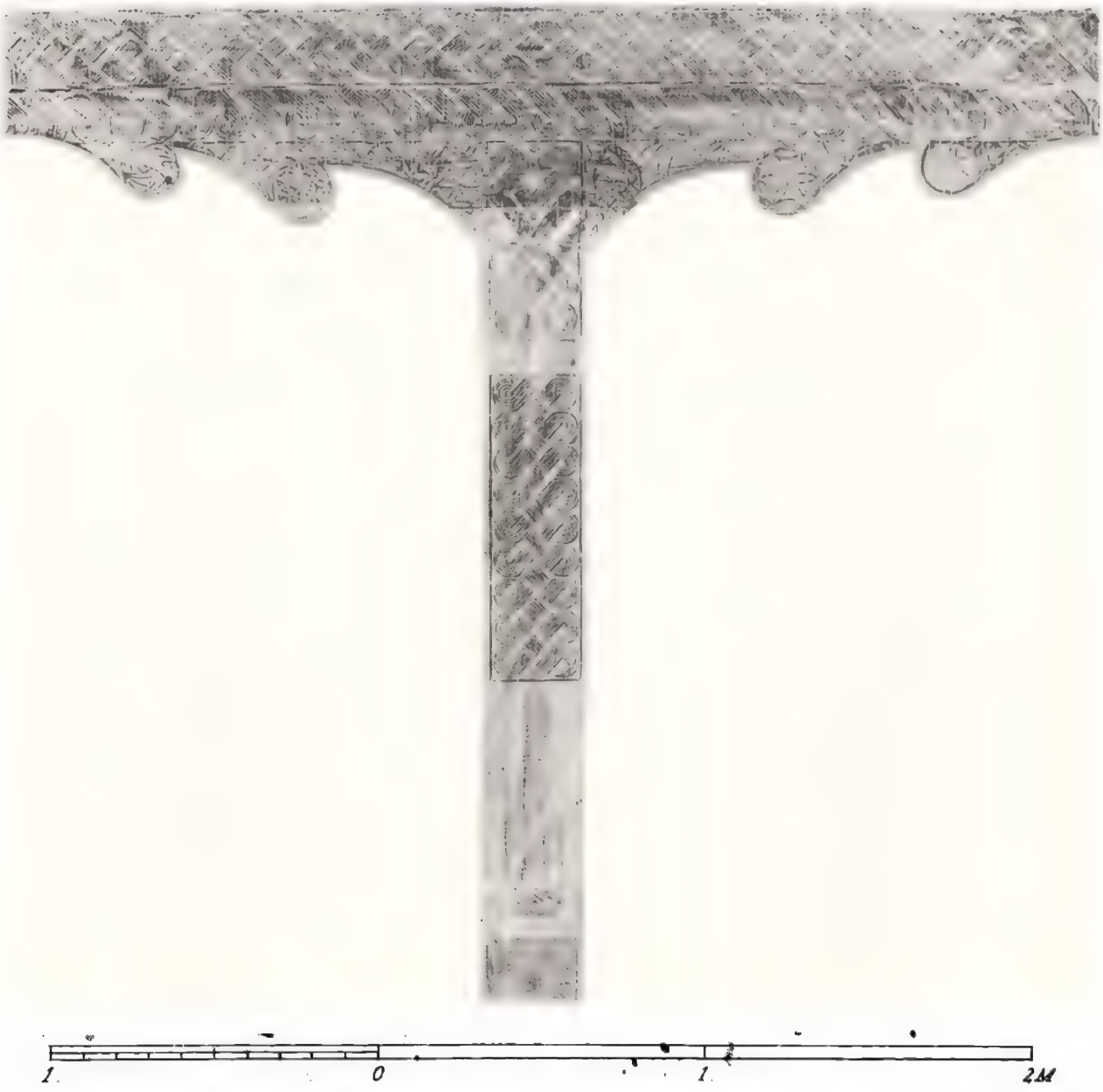


Fig. 166: One of the columns in the portico of Keshtagrom mosque, reconstructed from rubbings made by L.E. in July, 1970.

The New Mosque in Keshtagrom, Lower Bashgal Valley

Fig. 164 & 165

In the summer of 1960 the construction of the new mosque in the village of Keshtagrom in the Nechingal Valley was nearly complete and the building was in use. Conforming to the general pattern of houses in the lower Bashgal, to the *kantar kōt* in Waigal and Ashkun, and to temples in the pre-Muslim time, space in the mosque is of two sorts: a room or rooms in front of which is a verandah, portico, or gallery, with a roof supported by large finely carved columns. The basic units of measure employed in this spacious verandah correspond to the *štümbələ* noted earlier: the distance a man with outstretched arms can reach from fingertip to fingertip, though here the units are larger than lifesize, being approximately 2 m 40 cm. The verandah is two units (or bays) wide and six units long; exactly the same proportions and the same number of units or bays as are found in a 'double house' in the lower Bashgal area. As a result, the general appearance of the

Fig. 167

mosque is that of an ordinary house and, from a distance, it is scarcely distinguishable from surrounding dwellings. There are, however, some significant differences in the way it is constructed. All of the bays or units of the mosque verandah are open, whereas on a house, not only are both ends of the verandah closed, but the right and left end bays of the front of the verandah are also closed by wooden panels. This front wall of the mosque verandah is, moreover, of a much simpler construction than that of the typical house in lower Bashgal. A large sill, which in

Fig. 164

cross-section is some 50 cm high and 40 cm broad, runs the entire width of the building. This is a single baulk approximately 15 m long. The inner two-thirds of the top surface has been adzed about 4 cm deeper all along the length of this timber, leaving a higher step on the outer edge. The broad vertical 'plank-columns' supporting the outer edge of the roof, (six in all, plus one square column), are simply slotted down into this sill. The top ends of these 'plank-columns' have been cut with a projecting tenon, which slots up into a lintel or head rail running, like the sill below, the full width of the building. On the front surface of these 'plank-columns' the raised column part or rib has been cut away at the top to make room for the insertion of a fascia board which also extends across the entire front of the building. The function of this fascia board is to provide a matching timber for the sill below so that the 'window' openings will be framed symmetrically above and below when the building is viewed from the outside.

These 'plank-columns' give the visual impression of being composed of two separate members: a timber roughly 10 cm × 15 cm × 2 m placed in front of a heavy plank that is approximately 10 cm thick, 50 cm wide, and 2.50 m long. On the Keshtagrom mosque this impression is heightened by the fact that the surface of the smaller raised portion of the timber has been covered with finely detailed carvings, leaving all surfaces of the larger portion entirely plain. Nuristani builders, when they come to apply the carved symbols, often indulge in this kind of *trompe-l'œil* work, making single pieces of timber appear as if they are made up of two or more components. In fact, the 'plank-columns' are single pieces of wood.

cf. chapter II, Lower Bashgal

Unlike the plank-columns on house verandahs, those on mosques lack the tapering projection at the bottom which extends down across the face of the sill, nor do they slot through or fork over the sill and extend down to the verandah floor on the inside.

There are two final differences between mosque and house construction in the Bashgal region. First, the capitals on the columns supporting the roof of the mosque verandah are very large and ornate, extending out so far as to join those of

Fig. 167: The exterior of the Keshtagrom mosque after its completion. Photo: L.E. 1964.

the columns on either side, and forming a shallow arch in the process. Second, the columns themselves are square in cross section, at least the upper 2/3 of the shaft is; often the lower third has been adzed to make a faceted, almost fluted surface above the square base. The columns in domestic dwellings in lower Bashgal are round in cross-section.

The mosque in the lower part of Kamdesh (Yurbagrom) is very similar in appearance and construction to the Keshtagrom mosque described above. It does, however, differ in certain minor details. The most striking of these is that whereas the columns of the front elevation on the Keshtagrom mosque are plank-columns similar to those of domestic dwellings, the corresponding columns on the Kamdesh mosque have been carved in what we might call 'temple style' to match the parallel row of columns down the centre of the portico.

Fig. 168

In general we may say that, within each of the cultural regions of Nuristan, the newer mosques are very similar in appearance. This is not only due to the influence of local styles and techniques, but is also due to the fact that the same craftsmen may have been involved in the construction of buildings in different villages. Recent fieldwork has shown that a good builder is much in demand and may spend his summers working on projects in different villages at the request of local elders. The older mosques, on the other hand, show a much greater variation in style and technique. This is partly due to the fact that, as already mentioned some of these older mosques occupy 'kafir' temples and have subsequently been adapted, but it may also be a result of another factor: there is evidence to suggest

Fig. 163 & 169

Fig. 168: The portico of the mosque in the lower part of Kamdesh, (Yurbagrom). Photo: S.J. 1960.

Fig. 169: Kamdesh. The old mosque in the upper part of the village, used during the day as a school. All of the main transverse beams are supported by large ornate columns. The shallow alcove in the back wall indicates the correct direction to face during prayers. Photo: S.J. Aug. 1960.

that fifty and more years ago there may have been a greater number of skilled craftsmen in Nuristan than there are today and individual villages were possibly more self-sufficient in this respect, thus developing their own distinctive variations in architectural styles.

An interesting example of a mosque that is very different from those described

Fig. 170: Kamu. Lower Bashgal Valley. From the cloister round an open courtyard inside the mosque; a rather unusual feature. All the columns are different, which indicates that they were originally used in other buildings. As they are square in section, they perhaps come from older mosques (or temples?). Photo: S.J. 1960.

above is the one in Kamu in the lower Bashgal valley. From the outside the building is not immediately recognizable as a mosque, presenting as it does mostly blank walls of masonry coated with clay. Once inside, however, a small open courtyard is revealed encircled by a cloister. This covered arcade is supported by large and finely carved columns in the 'temple style', i.e., they are square in cross-section and are surmounted by large ornate capitals. The effect is one of symmetry and unity, skillfully achieved, but what we see is almost certainly the modification and adaptation of an earlier building or buildings. It must be said, however, that our visits to the Kamu mosque were brief, we were in the midst of other research,

and so it was only later when studying our photographs that this idea grew. Without having had an opportunity for further investigation, it seems that the cloistered courtyard may have been added to an already existing building (? temple) or may have been constructed to make use of columns from a temple that had been torn down. The illustration provides several interesting clues: here along the south side of the courtyard we see four finely carved columns in the traditional style. Between the first (nearest the camera) and second columns, however, an adzed pole has been inserted to support the S.E. corner of the colonnade that runs along the east side of the courtyard. This is an anomaly and could have been avoided by aligning the east colonnade with the first column on the left. That the builder did not do so is almost certainly due to the fact that either he was modifying an existing building or making use of timbers from a building that had been destroyed. This conclusion is supported by the fact that of the four columns showing in the picture, no two are alike. Normally these would all be matched in style and detail. The column in the centre of the picture has even been cut through and a section removed to shorten it so that it will fit into the structure. Since the column is tapered, diminishing in size toward the base, this has left a 'step' half way down that, together with the cut mark, clearly shows in the picture. The Kamu mosque would certainly repay further study.

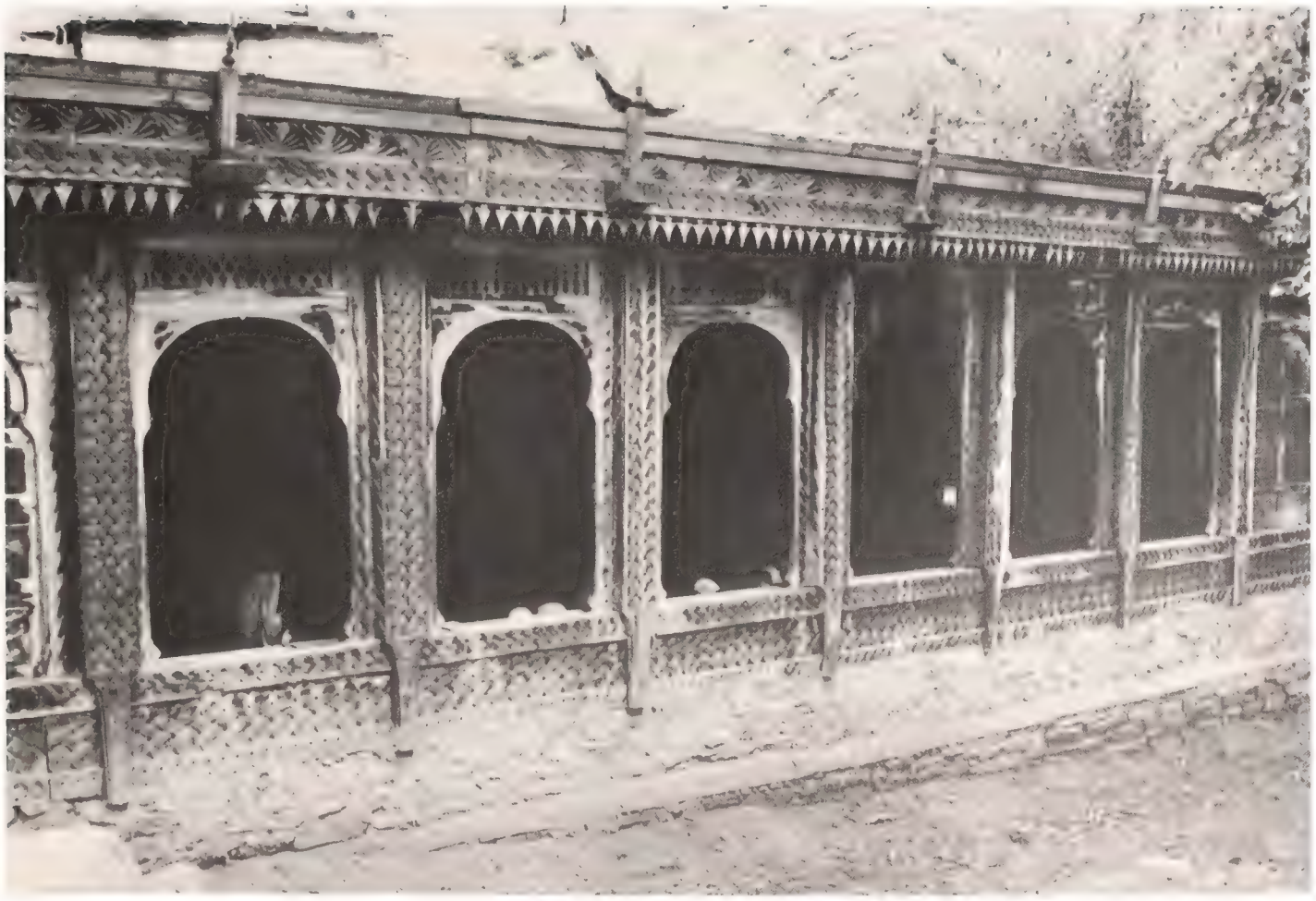


Fig. 172: Mosque. Village of Malil, Ashkun district (Western Nuristan). The carved decorations on this building are immediately recognizable as belonging to the 'Ashkun tradition', featuring prominent designs made up of progressively smaller circles set within each other. An unusual feature of the construction of this building is the absence of any large columns dividing window spaces. Instead, the weight of the roof is taken at its outer edge by heavy vertical panels set between studs approximately 10×10 cm in section. Photo: S.J. Dec. 1960.

Fig. 171: A mosque from Aftsai, Upper Bashgal Valley. Here the typical Lower Bashgal style of design and decoration are effectively incorporated into a building displaying a very lavish standard of carved detail. In a domestic dwelling one would expect window spaces in multiples of three, but here we find eight openings, the first and last of which are closed with decorated panels. Each of the usual rectangular window spaces has been modified by the insertion of a wooden arch surmounted by a horizontal panel of open fretwork, clearly identifying the building as a mosque. When this picture was taken a class of girls was being taught in the building. Photo: T.F. Oct. 1970.

Editor's note: L.E. left no written notes on mosques. He did, however, survey and measure two mosques, which Babamorad Feraghi has made working drawings of: a mosque in Muldesh, recorded on the 12th of July, 1964, and a mosque in the lower part of Waigal Village (cf. map, Fig. 148 chapter III), on the 20th of July, 1964, both in the Waigali-speaking region.

Fig. 173: The surveyed mosque in the lower part of Waigal village. The room behind the portico. In the foreground to the left is a fireplace. The square of light on the floor (to the right) is perhaps cast through a smoke hole. In the background a little window is seen. Photo: L.E. 1964.

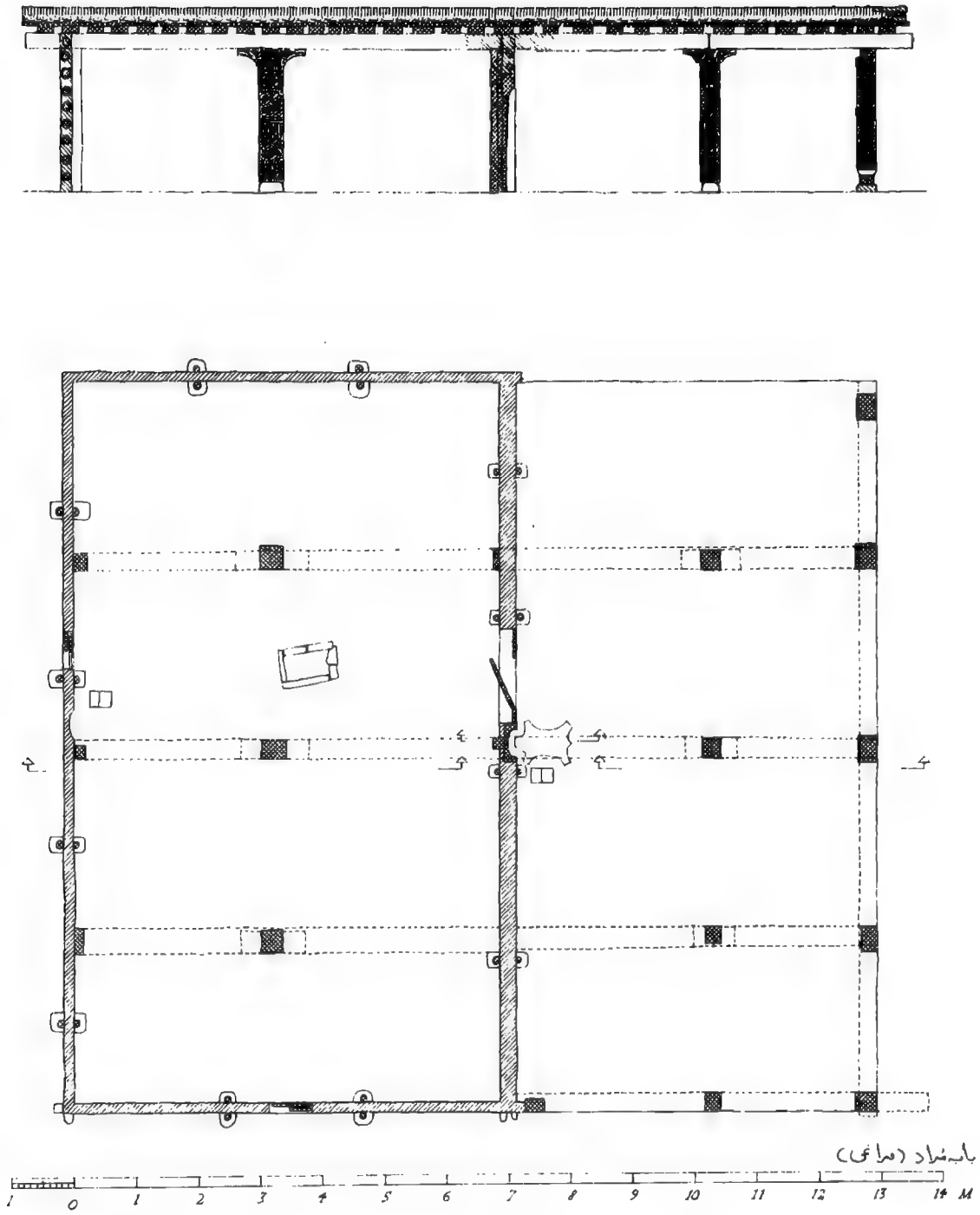


Fig. 174: The mosque in Berimdesh, Waigal village, (indicated on the map, fig. 148). Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi and measured by L.E. the 20th of July, 1964.

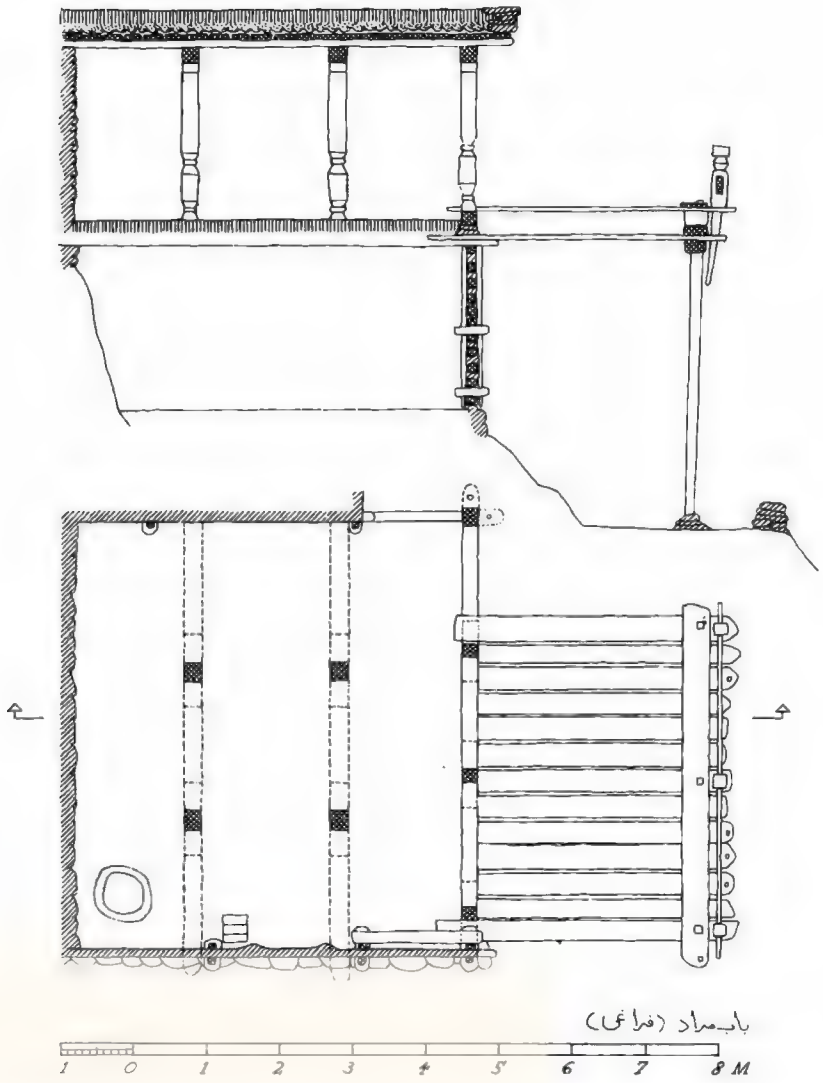


Fig. 175: Working drawings of a mosque in Muldesh, **Waigal Valley, drawn by** *Babamorad Feraghi after measurements taken by L.E.,* **12th of July, 1964.**

Fig. 176: The mosque surveyed in Muldesh. From the portico, showing the qibla, *a niche made of plaster (indicating the direction for prayer), with a hand modelled over it. L.E. has noted in his rough sketch that another such imprint was found on the under side of the capital of one of the columns. The wooden steps are used by the mullah to preach from. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

V: Towers

The second time Sir George Scott Robertson went to Kafiristan he planned to stay for some time and, after arriving in Kamdesh on the 1st October 1890, he started looking for a house to live in (cf. Robertson 1896, pp: 89-93). At first a picturesque tower in the upper part of the village was considered. It belonged to a man called Aramalik Chárá whose mother, Sumri, was a remarkable woman. Her social rank was so high that she was permitted to sit on a stool *outside* her house verandah. However, it was finally decided to let Robertson live in a house belonging to Utah, the priest, where his youngest and prettiest, but least-loved, wife was living at the time. She had to move to her father's home.

So Robertson never came to live in a Kafir tower, but he has, of course, described them (Robertson 1896, p. 493):

"A Káfir tower used for watch and ward is from one to four stories in height. It is of square shape, and commonly ten feet by ten feet. The door is always some considerable height above the ground, and is reached by a ladder, which can be drawn up in time of need, when the men inside are completely out of reach. The floor of each of the upper stories has a large square aperture in the middle, and each is usually provided with a ladder. The top of the tower, the three or four feet which constitute the parapet, is a little wider than the rest of the building, and projects about a foot outwards on every side. The roof of the tower at the foot of the parapet is pierced by a series of holes all round, which enable the defenders to see clearly all the walls of the tower, and to command its base. Such structures are sprinkled all over the country, and are, as a rule, extremely well built."

Fig. 177: In this picture from Dewa two towers are to be seen. Note also the winter stables in the foreground to the left. Photo: L.E. 1953.

Fig. 178: The tower in Shtiwe. Note the four poles on the roof with markhor horns. Cf. other pictures of Shtiwe in L.E. 1972: fig. 2 & 19, and Edelberg & Jones 1979: pictures 120 & 123. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 179: The tower of Pronz. Also seen on fig. 16 and 89, in L.E. 1972: fig. 3, 15 & 16 and in Edelberg & Jones, 1979: pictures 129 & 131. Photo: L.E. 1949.

Fig. 177, 178, 179 & 182 (colour)

When I entered the Parun Valley for the first time, in May 1948, all the villages – except Kushteki – had one or more towers looming over them. They were very characteristic, all were in good reapir and many of them had four long horns of the wild markhor on poles on their roofs. In 1964 only the village tower of Shtiwe was in good repair, cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, picture 120, taken in 1964.

I have seen only a few towers outside the Parun Valley. For instance from the village of Papruk (2400 m. altitude) one can see a tower on a ridge to the south-east. It is called Psanda kōt. I investigated it on the 22nd June 1948, leaving Papruk at 4.30 in the morning and reaching Psanda kōt at 8 o'clock. It is situated 3500 m above sea level on the watershed between two tributaries that flow northwards into the Graman River.

The plan of the tower is square and there are two storeys; the top storey is not salient. The only entrance was through a hole high up in the northeast wall leading to the second floor. The bottom storey was reached through an opening in the floor. I was back in the village again, by 9.15 a.m. – here they told me that the tower dated from the Kafir times.

Later on the same day I went further up the Graman Valley, to where the trees gave out and the valley becomes broader, amongst some huts in the mountain pastures. There was also a tower there, but this one was new. I seem to recollect the top storey projecting over the bottom storey – anyway the scenery reminded me very much of Karlah Jannah's stronghold in Badáwan (Robertson 1896, picture on p. 307).

I have a remark in my notebook from 1964 about a tower in the upper part of Keshtagrom – I was told it was built only six years earlier.

Fig. 180: Psanda kōt, an old watch tower. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 181: This picture from Bragamatal, Bashgal Valley, shows another tower. The construction of the bridge is also noteworthy; particularly the parapet is more elaborate than usual. Cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979: picture 100 (same tower, in colour). Photo: S.J. March, 1967.

Fig. 183: The two lower towers in Pashki, photographed from above. Below lie the fields, bordering the Parun River. Photo: L.E. 1948.

A tower in Pashki

"At Pushkigrom, the lowest village in the [Parun] valley, ... the houses are built on a slope which is surmounted by watch-towers, from which extend walls which run down to and encircle the houses. This surrounding wall is strengthened with barricades at different points, and looks very strong" (Robertson 1896, p. 483).

The wall referred to here is called *Ram-yŭ* (*üyū:* castle, Motamedi, 1953, p. 201). In 1964 it could still be seen between the two towers above the village of Pashki, but did not continue down to the two lower towers. So it does not now encircle the village and thus the two lower towers stand isolated.

Fig. 182 (colour) & 183

On the 28th of July 1964, Abdul Rahim arranged it so that I could survey and measure the lowest tower; he was a bit worried about my safety, as the tower was in rather a dilapidated state.

The tower is not quite square in plan; it measures roughly 5.3 × 4.3 m (17 ft 4 ins × 14 ft) and is broadest in the direction of the valley. This seems to apply to all the towers of the Parun, i.e., if they were not exactly square. The entrance is in the wall facing up-river.

Fig. 185

The tower is four storeys high and the walls are very thick, particularly in the two bottom storeys. They are mainly made of stone and clay with only a few horizontal logs; these seem to be embedded in the masonry without any actual joints; indeed, the wood seen here and there on the photograph may only be part of the floors.

The horizontal divisions between the storeys, viewed from inside the tower, consist of beams; three beams in each of the lowest three divisions and two beams in the roof, each supported by three stout round pillars, and on top of this a layer

Fig. 184: The surveyed tower: the lowest tower in Pashki village. Photo: L.E. 1964.

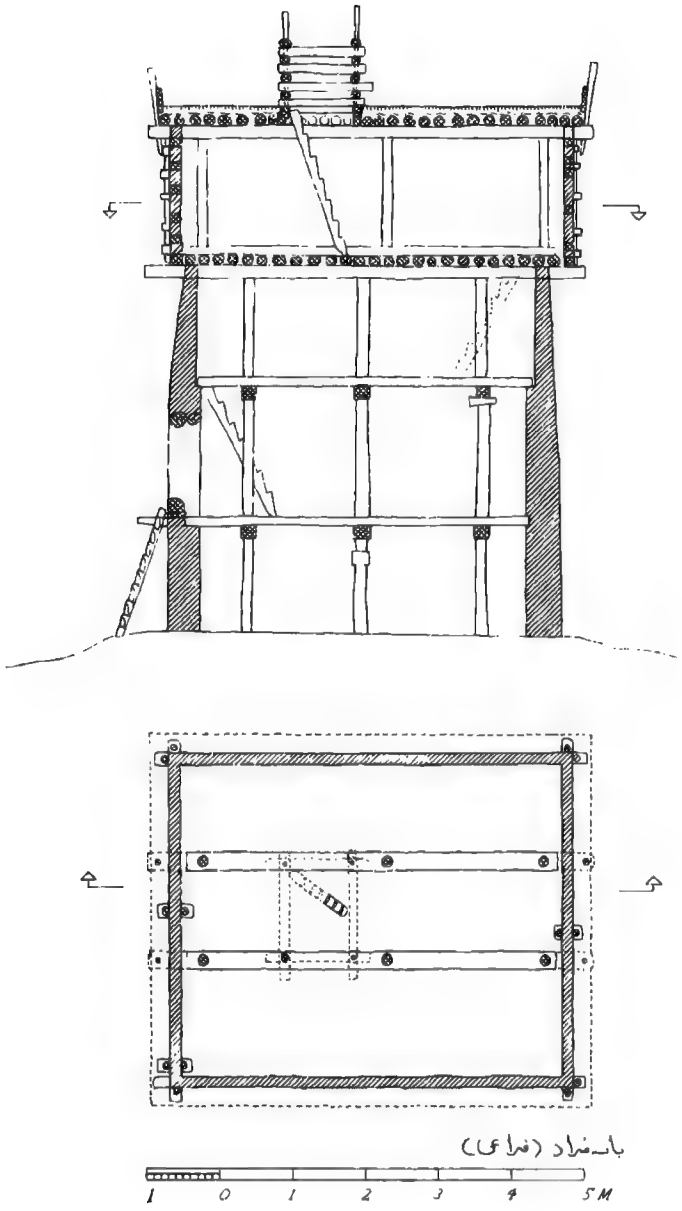


Fig. 185: Working drawings of the tower that L.E. surveyed and measured on the 28th of July, 1964: the lowest-lying tower in Pashki village. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

of round poles reaching from wall to wall. There are no wooden slabs, chippings and clay as in the houses, one can look through from one floor to another.

In the two lowest storeys the floor boards – or poles – lie in the same direction as the valley. The bottom set are embedded in the masonry, some of them protruding out on the other side of the wall; the log-ladder used for entering the tower through a hatchway leans against one of these. The next set of floor-poles rests on a ledge in the wall.

The top floor projects about a foot out over the wall on all sides. Here the beams lie in the direction of the valley, their ends plainly visible from the outside. As the pillars in this storey are not placed directly on top of the ones in the room underneath, an extra beam has been inserted between the pillars and the floor-poles.

The roof is also constructed with the beams lying parallel to the direction of the valley, then a layer of poles is across these and thereafter the usual layer for making a roof weatherproof. Pegs supporting a fascia board around the edge of the roof are passed through holes in the ends of the beams and joists.

The walls of the top storey are constructed in the same way as in some houses; the method called *pik'ū-nakur'ä* in Waigali. Some of the timbers are furthermore interlocked in the corners: a vertical pole is passed through holes in the ends of the protruding wall-timbers.

One can pass out onto the roof through a "hatchway" situated between the roof beams. A low wall has been built up so as to frame this hatch, looking very similar to the chimneys on ordinary houses. The horizontal poles in this framework are

Fig. 186 & 187: The top storey of the surveyed tower. Each floor has a square hole in it, through which one passes up or down via a log-ladder. Photo: L.E. 1964.

kept in place by vertical poles being passed through them at the corners. These vertical poles rise perhaps 2 ft (50 cm) above the frame, and once presumably held long twisted horns of the wild markhor, as could still be seen in 1964 on the tower of Shtiwe – though this does depend on whether the frame was considered a shrine in Kafir times, as was the case with the towers of Pronz and Shtiwe.[24]

Fig. 178

The pillars in the tower were just raw, stout pieces of timber, though the bark had been removed. One of the pillars in the second storey had evidently been too short: a big wedge had been inserted between it and the beam. A tentative effort at decorating had been made on one of the pillars on the ground floor: the top third was fashioned into a collar. There was also an attempt at a capital lying on the floor here, which indicates that someone had had intentions of elaborating a bit on the tower.

Fig. 188: A capital found lying on the floor in the tower. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Kushteki

Editor's note: As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, all villages in Parun, except Kushteki, had towers. L.E. had selected the following quotation from Sir George Scott Robertson's book and made a note about a sketch of the stronghold above Kushteki, which he had investigated in 1948.

Quotation from Robertson 1896 p. 484:

"There are some villages in Káfiristan which are both small and defenceless, and are also easily accessible. From such places the inhabitants must bolt at once if a formidable enemy makes his appearance. There are others which could be defended if the people were brave, e.g. Kstiggigrom [Kushteki] in the Presungul. There, however, the villagers prefer to retire to a large cave overlooking their homes, where they cannot be followed. From that safe and elevated position they have more than once watched their houses being sacked and burnt".

Quotation from L.E.'s diary, May 27th 1948, when he was in Kushteki:

"... I went up the mountain side by a very inaccessible path... The house lay about 100 m above the village, it looked small, was made of stones and clay and at

24. Robertson 1896, p. 396: "Occasionally the shrine is placed on the top of a village tower in Presungul, a plan I have seen in no other district", and p. 411: "Saranji is the tutelary deity of the village of Pontzgrom [Pronz]. She has a little shrine on the top of the village tower..."

the foot of the wall was a square hole. When I had crept in through it I found myself in a very big "room" – in two storeys – it was a cave. I went further in, over smooth, worn stones, and came out into a courtyard which I had not noticed from below – the parapet had embrasures overlooking the town. At the end of this open yard was a small closed yard with a little "spiral" staircase leading to an even more impracticable path. This is probably a refuge – the village lies exposed between the mountain and river – not like Wama on an inaccessible mountain side. The stronghold seemed to have been recently rendered with clay".

Editor's note: As this chapter has mainly dealt with the defence of villages in the Parun, it would seem appropriate to conclude with Robertson's description of defence arrangements in pre-Muslim times in the Upper Bashgal (Robertson 1896: p. 479ff.):

"The fort village is peculiar to the Katir tribe. In the Bashgul country, Ptsigrom in the Skorigul, Pshui [Pshuwor], Apsai, Shidgul, and Bádámuk are of this kind. These villages are built in an oblong figure; the houses, two or three stories high, surrounding a centre courtyard, which is partially occupied by a dancing-place and a rude altar, while the dancing-house or gromma, which is used in the winter and in bad weather, is close by. The exterior of such a village offers to an enemy an unbroken front, as all the windows of the rooms, looking outwards, are very small.

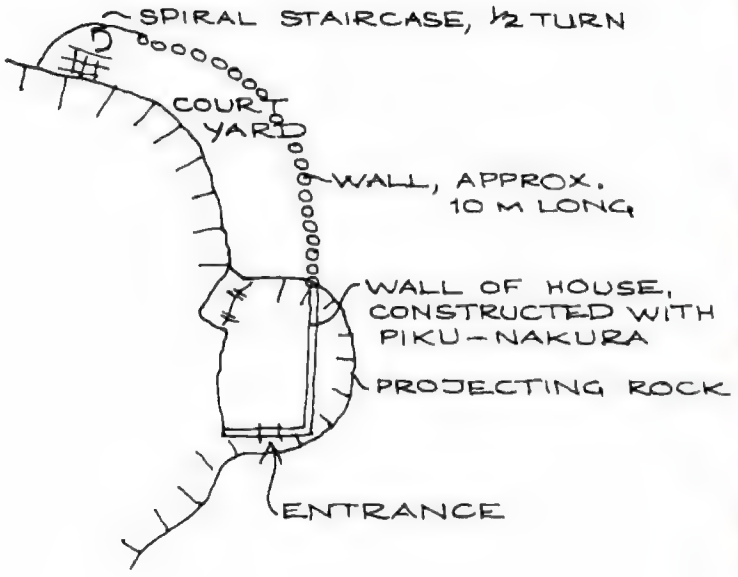


Fig. 189: Plan of the stronghold above Kushteki, copied from L.E.'s diary by the editor.

Fig. 190: The stronghold above Kushteki. The entrance leads to a big cave under the rock. Photo: L.E. 1948, also published in L.E. 1972.

There is usually only one entrance gate, or at most two, in which case the second not unfrequently, as at Bádámuk, leads into dark passages difficult to penetrate at any time without a guide. The main entrance is capable of being quickly and effectively closed. Such villages are usually built on the bank of a river flowing through the Káfir equivalent for a plain. When besieged, the inhabitants obtain their water from the river by means of a tunnel, which leads from the central courtyard to the river's edge, and ends in a covered way made of roughly hewn timbers. These fort villages contain from 120 to 200 different families, and are all greatly overcrowded. The houses which form the four sides of the oblong figure have low cellars like chambers underneath them, into which sheep, goats, and cattle are driven when an attack is imminent. The corners of the village are generally strengthened by towers, and at Bádámuk and other places, where there are steep slopes in close proximity, one or two detached three-storied towers are built up the hillside as an additional security. A great deal of wood enters into the construction of these villages".

Fig. 191: The central court of the village of Aftsai (or Apsai) in the Upper Bashgal. This picture was taken the 28th Sept. 1885 by surgeon G.M. J. Giles, Indian Medical Department, while on the Chitral-Gilgit Mission. It shows the inner court from one of the Kafir fort-like villages, which are described by Robertson (cf. quotation above). It is the only photograph known to depict these villages before the conversion to Islam 1895-1900. (Lockhart and Woodthorpe, 1889: p. 88).

VI: Graves and memorial platforms

By the editor

There are two types of edifices we have not as yet touched upon: graves, or tombs, and "memorial platforms", both of which are adorned with carvings that represent the status of the deceased or, in the latter case, the donor of the platform.

Prior to their conversion to Islam before the turn of the century, the dead were put in an undecorated coffin which was placed on top of the ground on a hillside (a piece of land not suited for cultivation) near the village (cf. Robertson 1896: p. 641 ff. and Herrlich 1938: picture 85), and, (apart from the Parun and Waigal Valleys, cf. Robertson 1896: p. 415 and p. 647), a year later a wooden effigy of the deceased was raised at a nearby location. This life-sized effigy was embellished with the rank symbols of the deceased.

Nowadays the dead are buried in a coffin and a monument is raised over the grave. The grave marker may range from a few stones put on end in the ground, to an elaborate tomb containing the graves of several members of a family. The cemeteries are divided up into different areas, according to clans and lineages, as are also the villages themselves.

Fig. 192: A grave between Waigal and Muldesh. Note the markhor (wild goat) horns. Good hunters are highly esteemed in Nuristan. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 193: A grave in Kamdesh, photographed by Wolfgang Lentz in 1935. The stick coming through the lid of the grave was for tying grave-flags to; it is not seen on the next picture.

Fig. 194: And the same grave photographed by Klaus Ferdinand in 1953. Since Lentz' picture was taken, another grave has been added.

Fig. 195: Another grave from Kamdesh. Photo: T.F. Oct. 1970.

Fig. 196: A grave from Muldesh. Photo: L.E. 1964.

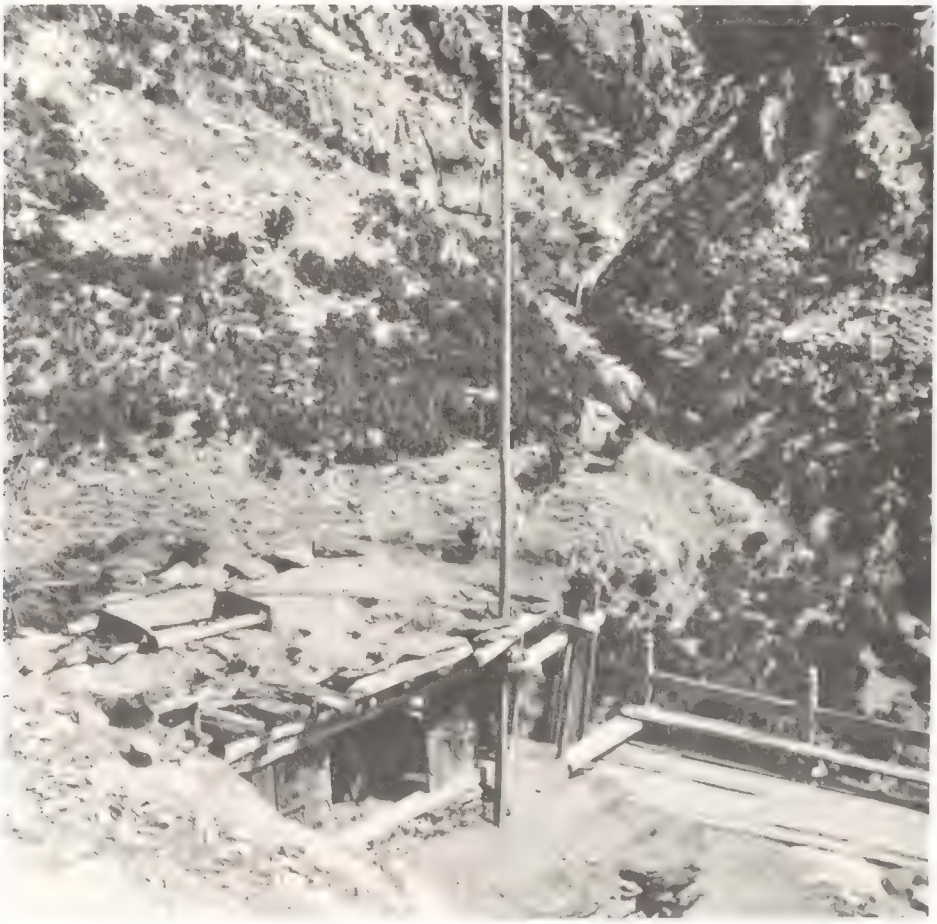


Fig. 197: A tomb near Wama. In the foreground: a flagpole and a platform built out over the edge of the cliff. In the background terraced fields are seen. (The same tomb is shown in L.E. 1965: fig. 22). Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 198: This grave near Jamach is unusual in that the construction is similar to that shown on top of a shrine to the goddess Dizane, cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979: p. 44, (from Robertson 1896: p. 396). Photo: S.J. Aug. 1967.

Fig. 199: A tomb near Kegal. Photo: S.J. Aug. 1969.

Fig. 200: A tomb near Nisheigram. The three-legged table to the right is made of wrought iron with a carved wooden bowl and is called a bāšpē, *(it is being taken down for the museum). The memorial platform to the right is falling to pieces; the loose timbers have been left by someone to collect later. The women are wearing goat-skin jackets over their homespun cloaks; these are still worn by both men and women in winter to keep their clothing dry in snow or rain. Photo: S.J. March. 1967.*

The *memorial platforms* commemorate an important person, though they are erected while he is still alive and he pays for it. They are wooden platforms (*wřikă, sagam* or *kụnă*) built on the outskirts of a village or jutting out alongside the narrow trails, usually commanding a fine view (Jones 1974: p. 198). They are fitted with benches, and the posts supporting the railings have the donor's rank symbols carved on them. Not only are they used as resting places, they are also popular as public meeting places (quote ibidem) "... they are built by a successful man who in this way not only gives a gift to the village but also perpetuates his own good reputation. Permission of the influential elders must be obtained before such a platform can be made and this is granted only after certain feast requirements have been met".

L. E. measured one such platform on the 13th of July 1964 and from these measurements Babamorad Feraghi made the drawings.

Fig. 201: Drawing of the memorial platform opposite Zhönchigal that L.E. measured in 1964. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

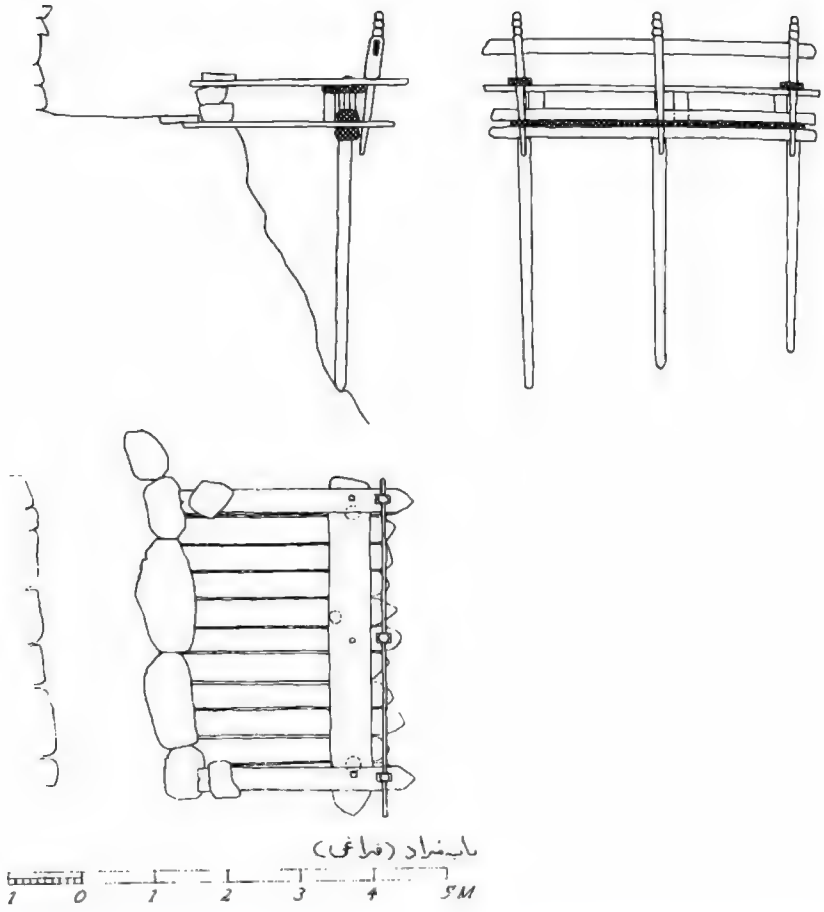


Fig. 202. The sagam *opposite Zhönchigal that is seen on the drawing. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 203: A platform commanding a very fine view of Kushteki. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 204. This memorial platform is near Waigal village. Built by private persons these edifices are intended as a gift to the public. Some of the men have a long walking stick with them, and the man to the right has a pellet bow, used for shooting birds with small stones. Photo: L.E. May 1948.

Fig. 205: A double platform near Muldesh. Photo: T.F. 7. Nov. 1970.

Fig. 206: This platform is not so lavishly decorated as the others shown. Behind it is a bridge leading to some terraced fields. Photo: L.E. (?).

Fig. 207: A miniature memorial platform made by children, perhaps made as a youth's dream of becoming renowned enough to be able to build a real one later. Photo: L.E. (The "model" is at Moesgaard Museum.)

VII: Winter stables and summer pasture stables

Editor's note: The following chapters deal with buildings that are related to food production, namely stables, barns, watermills and irrigation channels. To fully understand the purposes these buildings fulfil, the following text, quoted or summarized from Edelberg & Jones 1979, is included here:

p. 50: In Nuristan there is a strict division of labour; men and women have very different economic responsibilities... This division of labour exactly matches the two main spheres of the Nuristani economy: transhumant livestock herding – men's work – and cereal production on irrigated hill terraces – women's work.

And, concerning the pastoral activities:

p. 65: The year is divided into two parts: the winter, when livestock must be kept in stables at night on account of the weather and the danger of attack by leopards and wolves, and the summer, when the livestock are grazing under the care of shepherds during the day and are kept in walled enclosures at night.

p. 82: Saeter [i.e., summer mountain pasture] camps are numerous in Nuristan, both in the forest zone and on the alpine pastures... [They] are centres of dairy production, ... for which Nuristan is well known. The Waigali term *šāl* .... seems to

Fig. 208: The village of Pronz lies in an open U-shaped valley, the Upper Parun. The winter stables are seen here to the left of the village. Photo: L.E. 1953. Conditions similar to these are seen on fig. 177 from Dewa. Concerning the Upper Bashgal see fig. 139. Edelberg & Jones 1979 also contains many pictures of winter stables, e.g.: picture 131 of Pronz, 132 and 133 of Dewa and 130 of Kushteki.

cover both the winter stables and the pens and shelters at the summer pastures. .... The *šāl* is not only the goats' and cows' [and sheep] pens on a mountain pasture, but also includes a hut or cave for the herdsmen, their implements and utensils, and their stock of curds, cheeses and ghee [clarified butter].

Compiled from p. 71 ff and p. 91 ff: Conditions differ considerably from the open U-shaped valleys to the steep V-shaped valleys; indeed, they vary so much from village to village that each has its own complicated calendar and herding-system, with rules that are strictly enforced. Because of this, it is difficult to generalize, however, the pattern seems to be as follows:

Before springtime several families from the same village join together to form a cooperative herding and dairy-producing unit (Wg.: *palae*).

Each *palae* follows a definite migration route, visiting a sequence of different *šāls* between spring and autumn, and returning to their village only when the harvest and the threshing is finished. The dairy produce is fetched by people from

Fig. 209: Pashki village is built on the slope, and the winter stables lie at the foot of the cliff. These stables can be seen from above on picture 125 in Edelberg & Jones 1979. Note how the towers in Ram's wall are deteriorating, cf. fig. 182 and fig. 79. Photo: L.E. 1964.

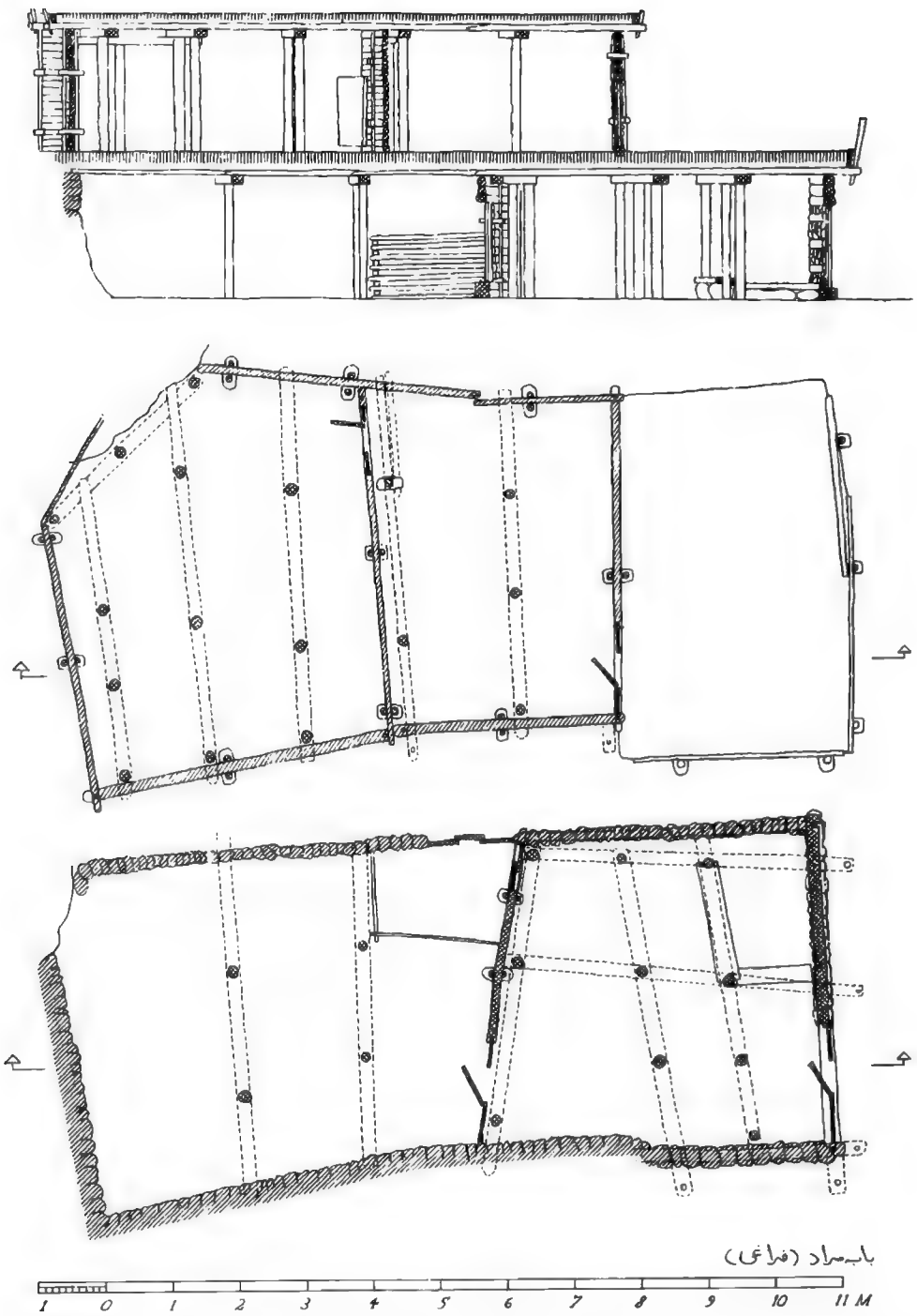


Fig. 210: A winter stable from below the village of Pashki, measured and surveyed by L.E. on the 27th July 1964. Both storeys have an outer and an inner room. The hearth is in the bottom, outer room. The bottom, inner room is a cow-stable and has a corner partitioned off by a low wall, marked "goats" on L.E.'s rough draft. There is a sliding shutter in the wall between this pen and the outer room. A door in the stone wall bordering the pen used to lead out from the neighbouring stable, prior to this stable being built; it is now barred. The two upper rooms are hay lofts, though L.E. has a note on the original drawing, stating that: after the hay has been eaten, in late winter or spring, the front room is used to house sheep and the back one goats. Drawing by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig 211A

the village on a prearranged day (the last day of the month), before the *palae* moves on to the next pasture.

Compiled from p. 65-70: The livestock consists mainly of goats. In the winter the goats from the V-shaped valleys are taken to the snow-free oak forests; those from Waigal Valley spend the winter around the confluence of the Waigal and Pech Rivers, while those from the Lower Bashgal move down to Satrgrom. The cows and sheep from these areas are kept in flat-roofed square stables near the villages at night. Their fodder is stored in barns, and in Waigal Valley, also in the *berim-ganja*. The saddle-roofed haystores from Waigal are recorded in the following chapter; those from the Lower Bashgal have flat roofs (cf. Robertson 1896: p. 261-262 and p. 497-499).[25]

p. 70: In the higher U-shaped valleys of the Upper Bashgal and Parun the livestock need to be kept in winter stables on account of the heavy snow falls and avalanches. The stables are built close to the villages.

Fig. 211B: Winter stables below Pashki. The recorded stable is to the left. The village is up in the background, with two of its towers visible, and the Parun River flows down the valley to the right. The manure from the winter stables is spread on the arable land. Edelberg & Jones 1979: p. 70: "When walking up the Parun valley from Pashki to Shtiwe one crosses numerous beautiful well tended meadows ... Throughout the whole valley ... hay, harvested from the irrigated meadows is most important for the livestock." Amongst the fieldnotes L.E. made while surveying the winter stable from Pashki is a remark: "It seems to be getting more common to let the livestock feed in the open space under a verandah, or just under a roof – no snow there". Maybe this goes for the stables to the right of the surveyed one – they appear more "open". Photo: L.E. 1964.

25. Cf. Edelberg & Jones 1979, the captions to picture 147: In the Ashkun area the farmers do not make separate buildings for the storage of hay, ... instead, many houses have covered verandahs which are used for hay storage in autumn and winter...
and picture 144: Wama ... is built on a particularly difficult part of the cliffs, 300 metres above the Pech River. Hay is therefore normally stored at a lower level and, as a result, the houses have verandahs, but no haystores underneath...

Fig. 212: From the recorded winter stable. Two shepherds sit on benches around the fireplace near the entrance door to the bottom storey. (All the pictures from this stable were taken during the summer, when the buildings were not in use). Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 213: From the recorded winter stable, showing the lower storey, facing the wall that divides the two stables. Standing near the hearth, we see the sliding shutter that opens onto the little enclosure in the corner of the cow's stable. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 214: From the recorded winter stable, taken from the entrance to the upper storey from the verandah, and looking towards the door separating the two stables/barns. The markings from the adze used to make the door are seen very plainly. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 215: Stables near a pasture in the valley leading from Pashki to Chetras. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 216: A šäl *in a forest pasture, between Pashki and the Ktiwi (or Kantiwo) Valley. The picture was taken the 21st May, so the* palae *must have been on their way up to the alpine pastures. Photo: L.E. 1948.*

Fig. 217: In the spring the governing council of elders announce on which day the palae *must leave the village with the livestock. On their way up to or down from their mountain* šāl *the* palae *might well pass through a* šāl *in the forest region, such as the one shown in the following pictures and drawings. A forest* šāl *from above Zhönchigal, consisting of a roofed house for the shepherds, an enclosure with man-high walls (but not roofed) and smaller enclosures of low, stone walls, and two small shelters built into the hillside, here barely seen to the right, above the house, under the trees. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 218: The house has two slate-stone walls and two timber and slate-stone walls constructed with pik'ū *and* nakur'ä. *The walls of the large enclosure for livestock are likewise of stone and wood, held in place by* pik'ū *and* nakur'ä. *Inside, the house is arranged very much like a village dwelling, with four pillars and a hearth in the centre. A corner, used to keep kids in, is screened off by slate-stones set on edge. Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 219: Above the shepherd's dwelling are two small shelters built into the hillside, seen here from above, between the trees. Photo: L.E. 1964. They were surveyed and measured by L.E. on the 13th of July 1964 and Babamorad Feraghi's drawings of them are shown here.

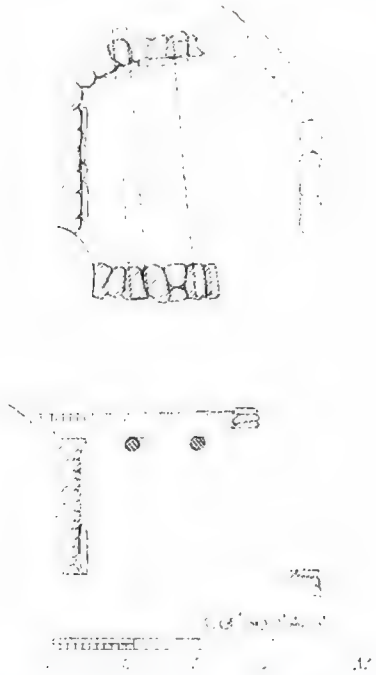


Fig. 220: One of the shelters that L.E. surveyed.

Fig. 221: The same shelter seen from below. There was no fireplace on the floor, only some cow-dung, so this shelter was probably not used by the shepherds. Photo: L.E. 1964.

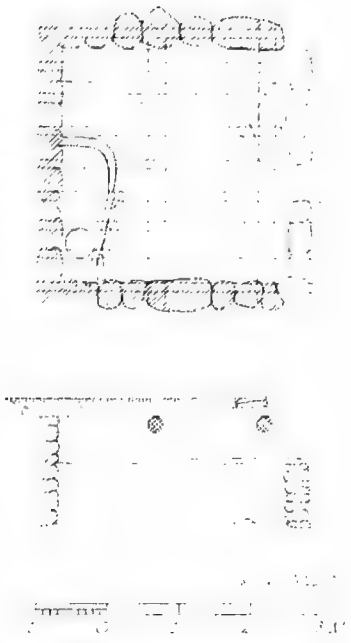


Fig. 222: This shelter was used by the shepherds, as there was a heap of ashes next to the door, and a shelf for jars and utensils along the wall to the right. The arrangement at the back of the shelter is seen on fig. 223. Behind the slate stones a depression in the earth showed where a vessel had been standing.

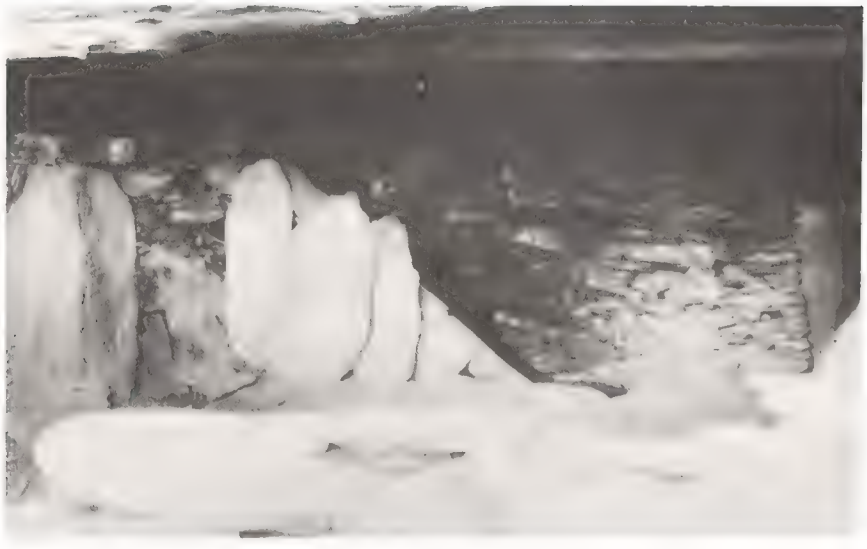


Fig. 223: The shepherds' shelter and storage room; the back wall seen from the outside. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 224: A mountain šāl *in the upper regions of Tsamgal. Photo: L.E. 1970. The huts, shelters and pens in the mountain* šāl *do not differ much from the ones shown from Zhönchigal; as wood becomes scarcer they tend to be constructed more of stone.*

Quotation from S.J. 1974: p. 33:

"The higher summer pastures are from 3000 to 3500 m above sea level. Here, toward the upper limits of the pine, cedar and juniper forests, the herdsmen have built their summer camps; low stone structures with flat earth-covered timber roofs. Inside, they are blackened with smoke and the roof is too low for a man to stand upright. On top of such a structure, and on either side of it, are others for the livestock."

Fig. 225: A summer stable (also called šāl*) above Chimi in Ashtaragala Pass. Quote from Edelberg & Jones 1979: p. 65:*

"In Nuristan it is the men – mainly the young men – who take care of the cows, the goats, and the sheep. Goats are particularly important because they provide the means for not only economic but also social success in Nuristani society."

And from the caption to picture 119:

"[The mountain pastures] constitute by far the largest of the productive areas in Nuristan. In these high regions the adult men spend most of the summer with their flocks and herds – receiving news from the village only when people come up to fetch ghee and cheeses before the shepherds leave one pasture to go on to another." Photo: S.J. August 1967.

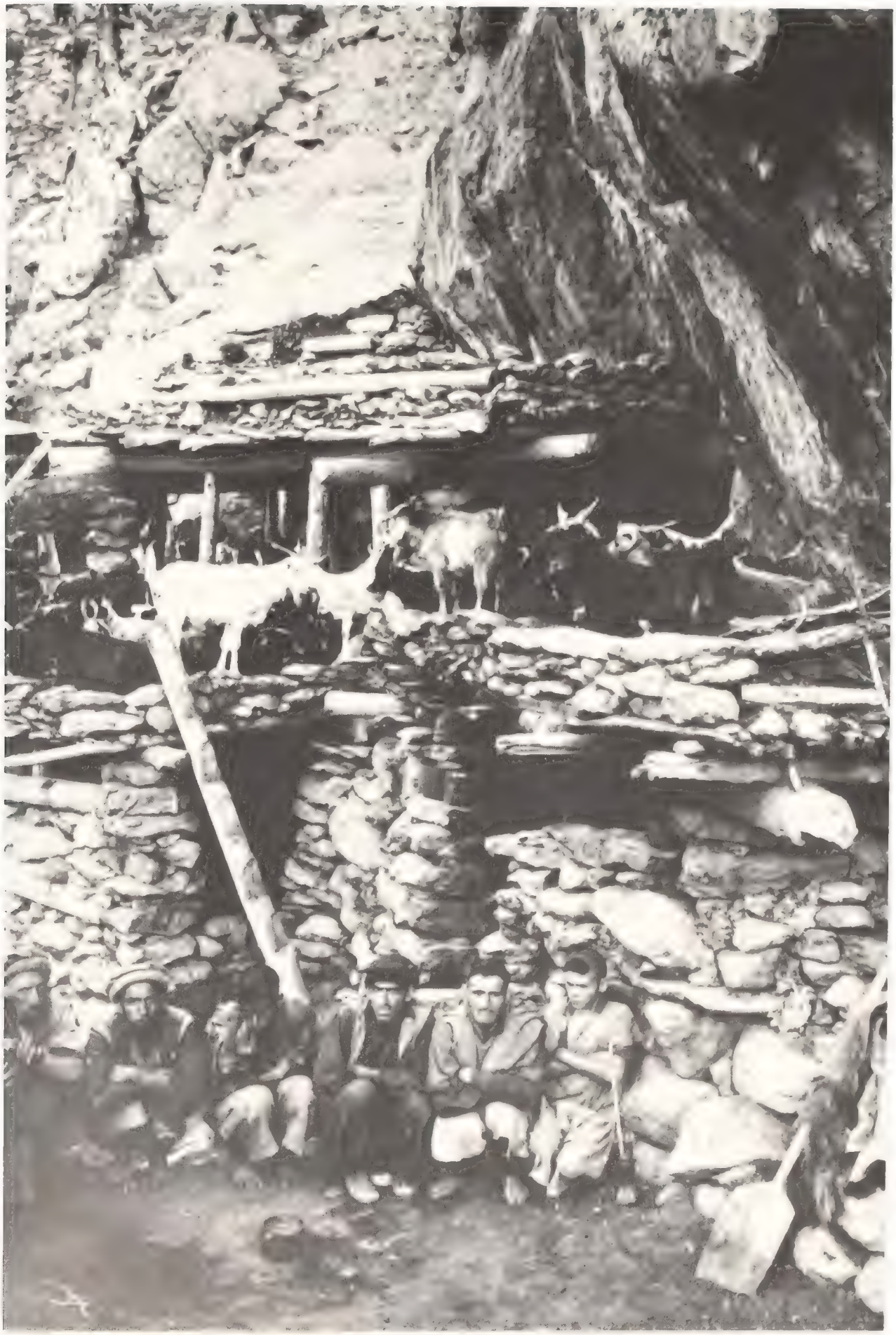


Fig. 226: Finally, some enclosures from far up the Nechingal Valley. Although they can hardly be called a "Nuristani Building", they are an indispensible element in the very highly developed dairy producing tradition which is so vital for the Nuristanis. Quotation from Edelberg & Jones 1979, p. 83: "... the area [around the šāl] is divided into sections for different work purposes. A certain space is set aside for assembling the goats for the night and it is fenced at points where the goats might escape, the entrance being furnished with a wicker-work gate. Small roofed-over pens with shutters, often of slate, are arranged for the kids, so that they can only take milk from their mothers when allowed to. There are also two separate walled enclosures for the calves and the cows ...". Photo: L.E. 1964.

VIII: Barns

A barn with cross bracing, from above Muldesh[26]

Fig. 227

On the 12th of July 1964 I awoke with a start in my tent in Muldesh. It was still quite dark, but a thought had occured to me while I was still half asleep: I seemed to remember having seen a cross bracing the day before, a log placed diagonally in a timber frame. I realized it must have been in one of the barns above the village – that is if it wasn't pure imagination.

For some years I had wondered why cross bracing was not used in the Nuristani houses, and had eventually resigned myself to the thought that it was probably not yet invented by them, or at least not used in practice. I was too excited to sleep on, and by dawn I was up at the barn. The cross brace was indeed there, in a hayloft with a pitched roof. Most roofs in Nuristan are flat; pitched roofs are exceptional and only used on barns, and furthermore only in part of the Waigal-Ashkun district.[27] Cross braces are, however, only used in haylofts with an open gable, which in turn means only in the southern part of the district.[28]

Fig. 228 og 229

The barn recorded here is rather big compared with the others I saw. There are three posts placed in the center of the building, and their top ends are hollowed out to support a ridgepole along the roof. The rafters look a bit like gigantic crochet needles; a branch forks out at their top end, and this is used to "hook" them over the ridgepole. The barn is built into the hillside, so the back post is shorter than the two front ones; it rests on a stone terrace built out from the hill, whereas the two front ones are let into the floor. The front gable is entirely open. Next to the bottom part of each of the two front poles stands a post, also set in the ground and about 2 m (6 ft) long (the front pair are lashed together with osiers), supporting a beam that runs the length of the building, coming to rest on the stone ledge, next to the back post. This beam and two others at the same level in the side walls are called the "three brothers" by Nuristani *baris*, – Waigali: *verecvrən* (Georg Morgenstierne 1954: p. 311). The lateral "brothers" also rest on the stone wall at the back, but in front they differ from the central beam, in that they pass *through* the posts supporting them; these posts stand at the end of the lateral, stone walls, which are otherwise quite independent of the wooden structure.

Fig. 227, front elevation

The posts that terminate the lateral walls continue a foot or so above the "brothers". Their top ends are hollowed out to support a purlin at either side; these continue to the back wall. We now come to the cross bracing: in the front of the hut two diagonals start below the surface of the built up floor and traverse up to either side-purlin. The brace is hollowed out like a crutch to receive the purlin. Thus the front part of the roof is prevented from settling; the same problem does not arise in the other gable, as the side-purlins are firmly secured amongst stones in the back wall.

The floor of the barn is the terrace upon which it is built. This terrace ends abruptly outside the front of the building, and the entrance to the bottom storey is through a gap in the righthand side wall.

Fig. 228 og 230

26. This barn has previously been described in Edelberg 1979.
27. The first time I saw a hut with a pitched roof was the 1st April 1948 in the Ashkun area, i.e. the Aduri Valley north-east of Wama.
28. Personal information from Torkil Funder: Haylofts with cross bracing in open gables are quite numerous around Kegal in southern Waigal Valley.

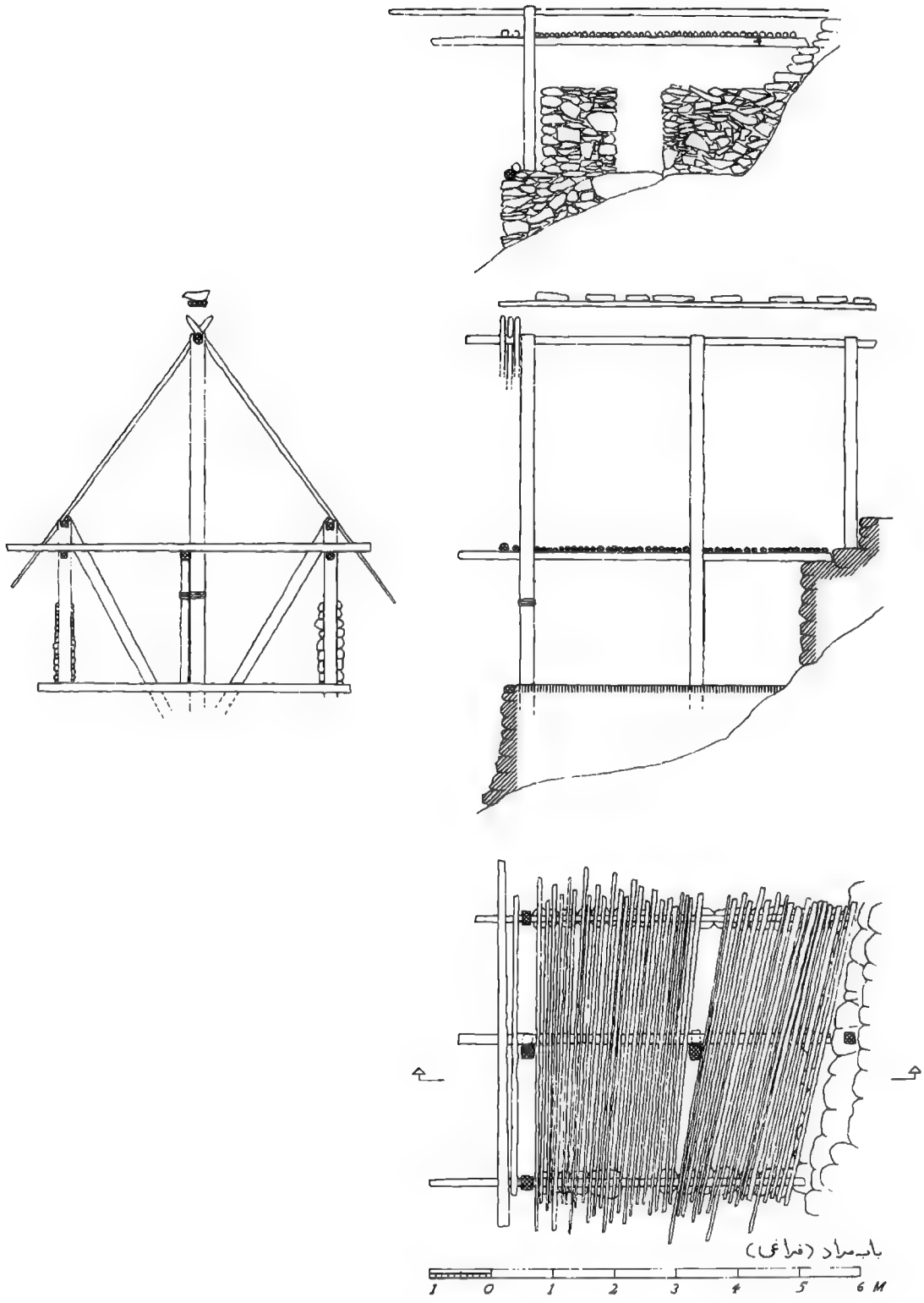


Fig. 227: The barn from above Muldesh that the author and his wife measured on the 12th of July, 1964. Drawing by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 228: The front of the barn recorded from above Muldesh. It shows the front central post, the "three brothers", the two purlins along the lower edges of the roof, the two uprights framing the lateral walls and the two diagonal bracings. Photo: Pierre Centlivres, June, 1964.

The floor dividing the lower storey of the barn from the space under the pitched roof – the hayloft – consists of round poles, *katpol* (Georg Morgenstierne 1954, p. 271), 44 in all, laid loosely upon the three "brothers"; the thicker ends are mostly laid to the left, so that the floor is nearly completely covered. The two foremost of these poles lie in front of the gable construction; the front one is particularly stout.

As previously mentioned, the roof rafters (also called *katpol*) resting on the purlins are prevented from slipping down by the forked end, which straddles the top purlin. They are tied to the bottom purlin with osiers. Boughs and twigs are closely woven between the rafters, and the roof is then thatched by inserting tufts of straw between this wickerwork. Straw is also placed along the roof-ridge; a plank is placed over it and stones weigh down the plank. (The thatching is not shown on the working drawings). The hay is thus protected from rainfall and still nicely ventilated: both gables are open and fresh air can also pass up between the poles of the floor or between the "brothers" and the bottom purlin.

cf. Fig. 236

The ground floor room will possibly house 2 or 3 cows during the winter, though I forgot to make sure of this. The winter is mild here and snow quickly melts, so the cows need shelter but not necessarily a closed stable.

Haylofts constructed with centrally placed posts supporting a pitched roof are also found further up the valley, but these do not have cross braces. The bottom storey is closed in the gables: a "box" construction that renders cross bracing superfluous. I think these are primarily used for goats. Often one of the lateral walls is panelled, in which case the entrance is in the panelled wall.

Fig. 231 (colour)

gable, seen from the other side. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 230: The entrance to the bottom storey, under the hayloft itself, through the right lateral wall. Photo: L.E. 1964.

A barn south-west of Zhönchigal

On July 18th 1964 my wife Margot and I were on our way from Zhönchigal to Muldesh. We had not chosen the path that runs alongside the river, nor the one that goes almost as high up as the passes, but one more or less level with the two villages. We had walked for about two hours, and were now at the spot where we had previously noticed a building with a pitched roof when we had been walking in the other direction. Such huts are often found in the Waigal area – I have seen plenty of them in the valley leading to the Jauda Pass and they are particularly numerous in the Tsamgal, gathered in little clusters.

We had met two farmers on our way; they had put their belonging up in a tree while they joined us and now helped us measuring, clearly intrigued. We thought we would soon be finished with our survey, that this was just a routine job, as we had already recorded a barn at Muldesh.

But here we were clearly mistaken. This barn and all the others above Zhönchigal differ quite a lot from those in Muldesh and Kegal. For one thing the cross brace is apparently only used in the lower Waigal region. I did not realize at the time how meagre my understanding of the constructions was when we packed up and went back to the village. Only by comparing our sketches carefully with the photographic material have I been able to get the plan, section and elevations to correspond. On the basis of these drawings I have tried to reconstruct a similar hut in Denmark (in the south of Sjælland) with the intention, amongst others, of solving the various problems, but I must admit that the building I would most like to go back to in Nuristan to check up on, is the following barn. However, a

ig. 232: Tsamgal. A cluster of barns and stables on the border between cultivated and pasture land. Photo: L.E. 964.

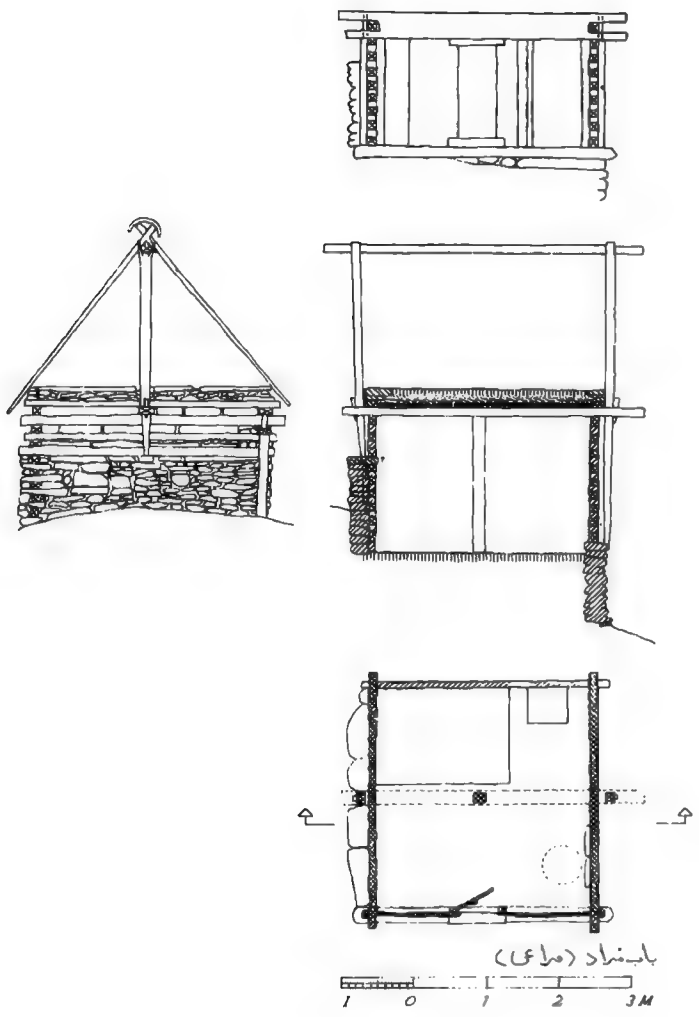


Fig. 233: The barn between Zhönchigal and Muldesh that was surveyed and measured by Margot and Lennart Edelberg on the 18th of July, 1964, drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 234: The hayloft surveyed near Zhönchigal. Here the bottom storey is a closed "box", a construction that renders cross bracing unnecessary. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 235: The opposite end of the same barn. Together, the pictures show how the front, panelled wall is connected with the lateral walls, and how the ridgepole is supported by a post running down outside each gable. Photo: L.E. 1964.

cloudburst during out visit to the *kantar kōt* of Zhönchigal in 1970 played so much havoc with our equipment, that we did not get a chance to consider the barn. Incidentally it is during cloudbursts such as this one that the haylofts serve their purpose.

Fig. 233 The ridgepole is carried by two posts at either end of the hut. At the top end the posts are formed like crutches – the one seen on the gable elevation has deliberately been split a bit. At the other end they are not dug down into the earth; they come to rest amongst the stones of the wall. They are stabilized in the following way: at the same level as the wall plate, or head, a beam is placed down the center of the hut – supported by an extra post in the middle – and at either end, where it projects beyond the gables, a hole of considerable size has been chopped, through which the vertical pole is passed, and kept firmly in place by a wedge. The post in *Fig. 235* the righthand lateral wall (as seen from the entrance) is also trimmed with a collar to prevent it from slipping further down, but apart from this no other building *Fig. 234* element keeps the post in position. The post in the other gable continues down through a wooden clamp – resembling a *nakur'ä* arrangement – and ends hidden amongst stones. I did not record the other end of this clamp as a *nakur'ä* on the inner side of the wall, nor did I record a *pik'ü;* maybe I had become so used to this method of construction that I overlooked them.

Three of the walls are built in the manner typical of the Waigal-Ashkun area, only here the filling between the horizontal wall timbers contain blocks of wood as well as stones. The lateral wall to the left of the entrance seems to have been strengthened by an extra layer of slates that have been built up outside – and not bonded to – the primary wall.

The fourth wall consists of sill, head and panels. It is parallel to the roof ridge and its connection with the lateral walls must be strong. To prevent the horizontal logs in the lateral walls from slipping out of place the panelled wall terminates at either end in a sturdy vertical log that begins with a tenon let into the sill, passes up *Fig. 234 & 235* on the outside of the wall, and ends with a tenon through the exceptionally heavy head. Where the upright has been trimmed down to form this upper tenon a collar results, and upon this collar the head rests. The head has been hollowed out at both ends, so as to let the top wall-timber of the gable pass through it – still "inside" the upright. The tenon continues up through both parts of the head.

The panels are, as usual, vertical, and held in place by grooves in the sill and head. The door opening is ensured equal width by a lintel and a threshold, both rabbetted to receive the panels, but I neglected to find out what prevents the lintel from slipping down. On the inside of the right-hand door opening a jamb is made from a plank set at right-angles to the wall. First the top of the plank is brought up into a notch in the lintel, then the bottom is slid into a groove and kept in place with a wedge, similar to the construction used when inserting a door into a lintel and a threshold.

The floor dividing the top and bottom storey is built in the same way and of the same materials as the flat roofs on ordinary houses; it is even lined along the edges with flat slate stones. The rafters and the woven boughs between them are as in the hayloft above Muldesh, but here the thatching in kept in place by poles placed rather haphazardly on top.

I think a Nuristani *bari* would be impressed by the sight of a well-thatched Danish house – if, indeed, the thatching is within his domain, which I failed to ask.

The roof ridge is covered by something resembling a thick layer of bark, but I

Fig. 236: A hayloft that has not yet been thatched, showing the boughs woven between the rafters. Note also the verandah. To the left of the roof other haylofts on the opposite side of the valley can be seen. Taken in the Tsamgal Valley, north of Waigal. Photo: L.E. 1964.

rather think it is the outer part of a tree trunk that has been hollowed out by fire or rot.

Because these barns and the fields associated with them are far from the village, it is more convenient to spend the night there during the intensive periods of agricultural work in spring and autumn, than it is to travel to and fro each day. For this reason the ground floor of the barn is used as a living room: in one corner the floor is raised to serve as a bedstead, in the other corner a trapdoor leads down to a little cellar. The possibility of arranging a cellar arose when the slightly sloping site was levelled before building. In the third corner there is a fireplace; behind it two big flat slates lean against the wall to protect the wood.

cf. Fig. 231 (colour)

Fig. 233

Schuyler Jones' note: There is some evidence to suggest that, in time, a new village may develop from such an outlying nucleus of fields and barns. As more land is cultivated in the area, some families may decide to move out of the village and live permanently by their fields. Nisheigram has an outlying farming community of this kind in Tsarigal.

If one should want to go further into the question of what a Nuristani *bari* thinks of these pitched roofs, and the way the constructions differ in the lower and upper regions of the Waigal area, I presume it would be necessary to study the differences in the linguistic terms used for the various components of the building, also taking due consideration to the difference in the dialects of these same regions.

Fig. 237: A photograph taken by W. Lenz in 1935, near Waigal; presumably a barn. It seems to be built in under an overhanging cliff. The ridgepole of the roof is supported by a vertical post that is held by a nakur'ä *construction in the end wall.*

IX: Bridges and irrigation channels

By the editor

Bridges are of vital importance in this mountainous country. They are built by *baris*. Rivers rise suddenly during the spring thaw and during the summer monsoon rains. On account of this the approach to a bridge may often be banked up to gain height. The problem of spanning greater distances is solved by cantilevers: large logs built into a stone foundation gradually project further and further out over the river bank, until the gap between them can be spanned by the logs available. They are usually very carefully and strongly built, but often very narrow and only furnished with a meagre parapet.

Fig. 238: A bridge over the Wezgal, north of Shtiwe. Streams and smaller rivers are often simply bridged by a couple of logs, but here they have been stabilized a bit by being woven together with small branches or osiers, and by several cross-pieces. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 239: An unfinished bridge near Bragamatal on the Bashgal river. One end of these sturdy timbers juts out over the brink and the other end is weighed down by stones, which are built up into a pier. The height of the bridge over the river is not only decided by the amount of stones needed for this, but also by the fact that the river, flowing peacefully enough here, can become a raging torrent. Photo: S.J. March 1967. A completed bridge in Bragamatal village is seen on fig. 181.

Fig. 240: The main path leading to Keshtagrom. A little bridge spanning a gorge, one side built out with cantilevers. There is a fine spring under the tree by the large boulders on the left. Even improving a path, as seen to the right, entails deftness at "building". Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 241: When the river becomes too wide, as seen here at Pashki, an extra pier is built in the middle. The side pointing towards us, like a boat's bows cleaving the current, is pointing up-stream. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 242: The same pier, built in the middle of the river, here flowing from right to left. Beyond the bridge some winter stables are to be seen. Above is the village of Pashki – all four towers are visible (cf. chapter V). Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 243A: The bridge over the Parun River at Dewa, seen from the South. The gateway at the end of the bridge facilitates defense of the village. A similar one is seen at Zumu (published as fig. 6 in L.E. 1972). Note also how the banks of the river have been neatly strengthened with stones. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 244: A safed posh *(white clad) man walking over a bridge (the same as the previous picture from Dewa?). Here one gets an idea of the stout timbers used. Photo: P.R. 1953-54.*

Fig. 243B

Fig. 245: The bridge below Wama. An especially neat example of the cantilever principle. A little extra support is supplied by some cross braces. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 246A

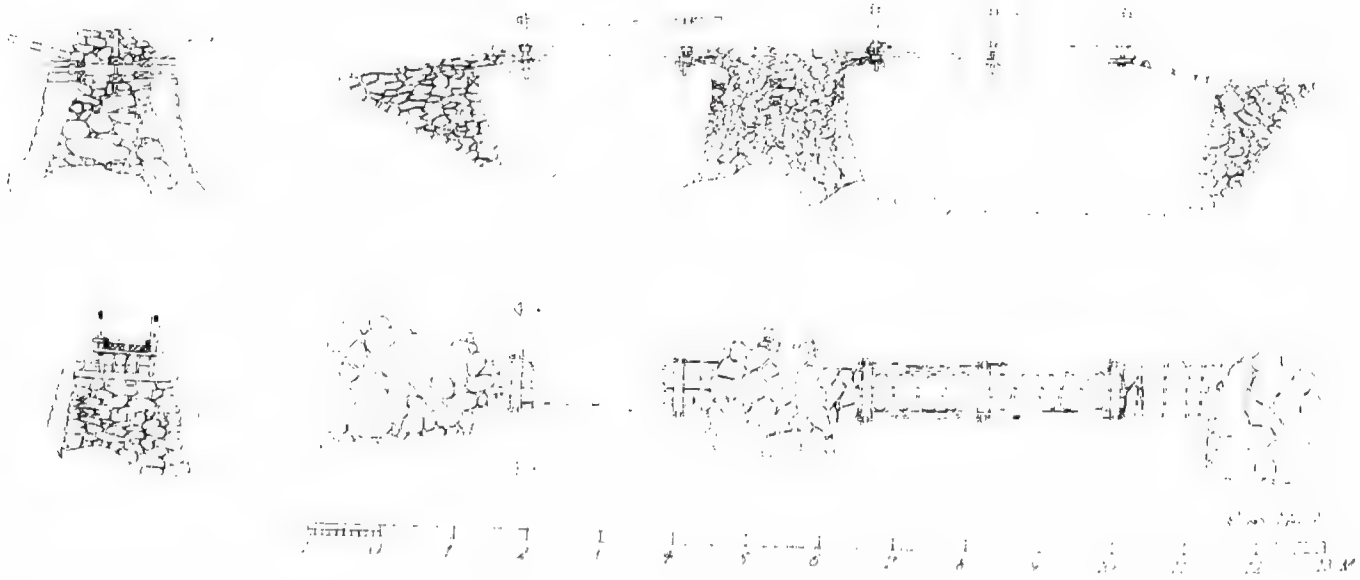


Fig. 246B: The bridge at Zhönchigal which L.E. measured on the 15th of July, 1964, the drawings of which are seen below. This bridge also has a middle pier. On the day he was surveying, L.E. noted that the stream to the left had dried out, but not the one to the right. We are looking upstream, both on the photo and the drawing. Amongst the stones of the middle pier, L.E. has noted a discarded millstone (seen on the drawing, plan). L.E. notes that a cantilever is called söbumpɨă *and the boards on edge forming a parapet are* kardama. *Photo: L.E. 1964.*

Fig. 247: Drawing of the bridge at Zhönchigal which L.E. measured on the 15th of July, 1964. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Irrigation channels are equally ingenious and neatly built. The following is from Edelberg & Jones 1979:

p. 50: The characteristic relief of Nuristan being one of high mountain ridges separated from one another by deep narrow V-shaped valleys, the fields for arable agriculture are small and must be labouriously constructed by in-filling to a horizontal level behind stone walls and then, because rainfall is insufficient, watered by a complicated system of open irrigation channels and wooden aqueducts leading from the rivers or, more commonly, from the tributary streams. The wooden aqueducts are technically admirable, having been constructed by skillful craftsmen, the *bari*. (See pictures 10 and 75).

p. 58: The rules of water allocation vary from village to village, but a common rule is for fields to be watered in turn, starting with the top fields on a particular slope and working down to the lowest fields. Each woman is responsible for watering her own terraces and, since watering goes on 24 hours a day throughout the summer, some women are always to be found on the mountain slopes. At night they pass to and from the village, lighting their way with burning pine torches, and singing songs.

Fig. 248: A wooden trough, perched high up on supporting poles leading irrigation water to the fields (near Dungul?). The man on the bridge gives some idea of the dimensions. The "rungs" in the poles supporting the channel are useful when climbing up to clean and make repairs to the channels. In the spring, this is done on a definite date, and each household must send a member to help with this work. Failure to do this would result in a fine (see S.J. 1974: p. 44). Photo: L.E. 1949.

Fig. 249 & 250: These two pictures show irrigation channels leading water from a tributary near Pashki. Photo: L.E. 1948.

Fig. 251: With a tower of Pashki in the background, this picture shows another elaborate water system, partly supported by poles and partly suspended by chains made of osiers. Photo: K.F. 1953.

Fig. 252: And finally, related to the irrigation channels, is this wooden trough supplying a

X: Watermills

cf. Fig. 43

I had stayed a month or so in the village of Pashki in the summer 1948, and when I arrived there again on the 20th July 1949 the smith, Gul Mohammad, immediately looked me up, wearing his black cloak (*siah posh*) and offering me a cow if I could get his watermill to work again. I asked what was wrong with the mill. It had become bewitched. They had been grinding grain one day when they suddenly heard dogs barking underneath the mill, whereupon the millstones had stopped.

The next day I examined the mill: first the millstones inside the building, then down underneath it, where the vertical axle is fitted with oblique vanes that are propelled round by water falling upon them – that is, when the mill is in use. This technique, an example of a horizontal watermill, very much resembles our northern European watermills.[29]

As I sat down there examining the various parts, Gul Mohammad came and sat beside me. He found some old bones lodged in amongst the stones in the wall and asked me what I thought of them. I didn't think much, and just continued my inspection – not because I wanted to earn a cow (I had already made it clear to him that I would rather do without the cow), but because I was glad of an opportunity to be of help to a Nuristani, so repaying a little of the hospitality and help I had received. He then said: "If you can't remove the spell with your fieldglasses, then don't bother. I have been a smith for 40 years now" (which could have been true, though the number 40 is often used to indicate a certain large quantity). He continued: "It is my profession to build watermills. I repair watermills for the whole village. This is my own watermill. It is bewitched". I answered: "We don't believe in that sort of thing where I come from. We always assume that it must be something mechanical that has gone wrong. That is why I'm examining the various parts". He shook his head – especially when I asked if the upper millstone, the runner, could be removed. It weighed about a quarter of a ton, but he and his assistant were able to roll it aside with the help of a lever.

I could not get the mill to work, although I went over all the parts thoroughly. We could rotate the stones a little if a lot of us pushed, but even if we let the water run at full pressure, the mill simply would not work.

Nevertheless, I acquired some first-hand knowledge of watermills, to which I was later able to add in other instances in Afghanistan. I found that watermills were surprisingly alike in the different parts of this vast country, although the millstones in Nuristan were exceedingly thick; even Akbar, who had travelled widely in these parts, found them remarkably heavy.

After my return home I happened to mention the above experience to my uncle. He was of a practical turn of mind and got me to draw a diagram of the mill, whereupon he exclaimed: "You say there were dogs barking under the mill. That must have been the stones in the riverbed collapsing – the stones that support the axle. Then the axle comes under strain where it passes through the bed stone". This sounded convincing.

I was fortunate enough to come to Pashki again in October 1953. When I met Gul Mohammad the first thing I asked him about was the mill: Oh yes, the mill was

29. Parts of this chapter have previously been published in Danish (Edelberg, 1960).

No.	English	Kati	Prasun
1.	stone socket	*akirə wât*	
2.	stone pivot	*čuk wât*	*ksir*
3.	vanes	*gör*	*cewer*
4.	crown	*pärəy'el pälnirə*	*komur*
5.	wedges		*waka*
6.	upright shaft		*uzu'ro*
7.	iron rings		*iži*
8.	stone spindle	*šuruk*	*žiəmə*
9.	wooden boss		
10.	bed stone	*wiř woř*	*bi'där*
11.	runner	*urel woř*	*lyitär*
12.	'damsel'	*mən'e-ḍun*	
13.	shoe	*naṣ'ul*	*u'da*
14.	hopper	*dol, kunə*	*wižu*
15.	ropes (in Parun: chain of rings made of willow)	*čot*	
16.	cord	*naṣ'ul mə'nâ*	
17.	check weight (to check position of string (cord) held by friction)	*ṭak-ḍun (?)*	
18.	eye	*woř-aš'i woř-cəw'i*	
19.	tentering yoke	*wačpa-ḍun*	
20.	wedges	*kyul*	
21.	layer of clay		
22.	floor	*aštərə*	
23.	rind		
24.	tentering rod	*'u-kṣo-kaṭe da-štyü*	*panǰminuk*
25.	sprattle beam	*guš-kunə*	*bi'tă-bitsenik-kundu*

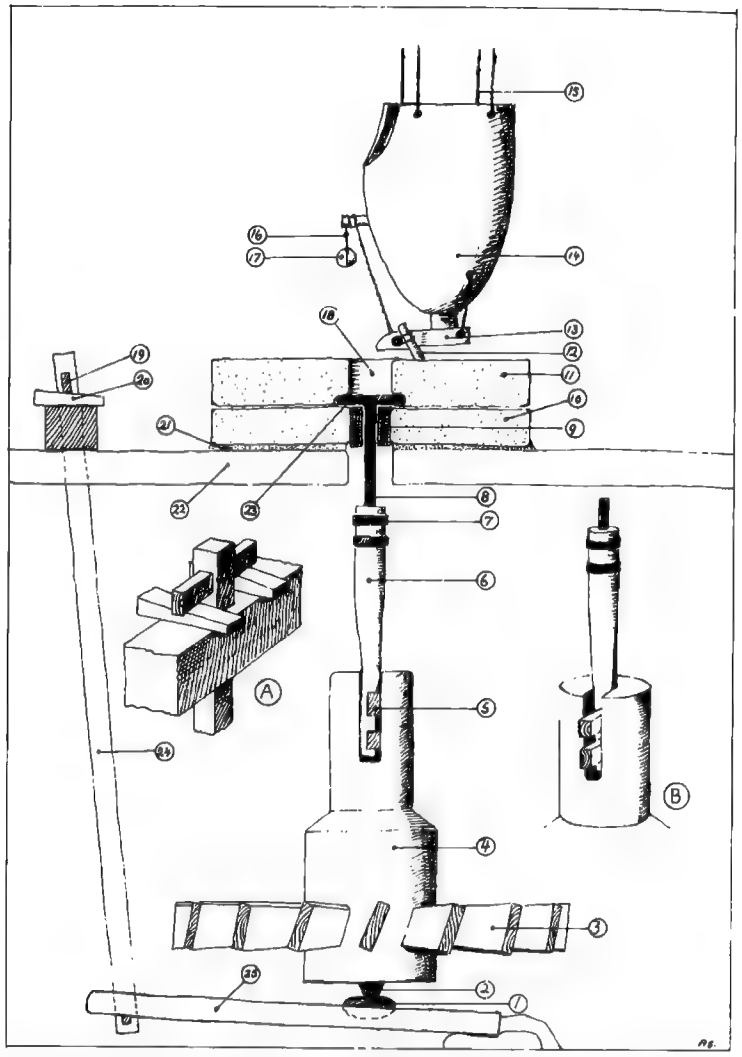


Fig. 253: The mechanics of a Nuristani (horizontal) watermill. Wg: awř'ən, wanǰal; *Kt:* apš'ē; *Pr:* iši. *Drawn by Aksel Sørensen.*

working perfectly again. A man, who came from the lower regions of Afghanistan had written something on a piece of paper. He had gone under the mill and pushed the paper up between the floor boards – after this the mill was again in working order. The Afghan was given the promised cow.

I then told him of my uncle's explanation, and that he could have saved his cow. He gave me an indulgent smile and, again referring to his professional experience, said that this was such a common fault, one that he had helped correct many times, and that they had even taken the whole mill apart and put it together again. But it had still been immovable. The following summer I saw him working on many occasions, either building or repairing watermills for people throughout the entire valley. No one doubted his ability, and I must admit that one has to search far and wide to find a more simple mechanism than that of a horizontal watermill. Maybe we should look into this before going any further.

The grain that is to be ground is placed in a hopper that is suspended from the ceiling of the mill-house. The grain then passes through a feeder, or shoe, that is suspended from the hopper, the opening pointing down to the hole in the middle of the millstones.

A slender pin goes across this opening; it is fastened on one side to another peg (the 'damsel') resting on the upper millstone, the runner, which shakes the feeder

Fig. 254: From a watermill in Keshtagrom. Photo: L.E. 1964. Editor's note: I believe it is from the recorded mill that belongs to Abdul Mohammad. Compare with Fig. 258, which is from a different mill.

cf. Fig. 258 & 272

as the stone rotates, so sprinkling the grain out little by little. The rate at which the grain is let out is regulated by the angle of the feeder, which is adjusted by a string attached to the other side of the crosspin. The string passes up and once around a peg, where it is kept in position by a check-weight, a little stone or block of wood.

In this way the grain gradually falls from the hopper, through the feeder and into the hole in the runner. The runner rotates anti-clockwise.[30] From there the grain passes in between the runner and the bed stone, is ground to flour, and falls out at the periphery of the stones.

The millstones I have measured vary in size, but if we assume the specific gravity to be 2.5 they weigh between 0.15-0.3 tons. The floor of the millhouse has to support both runner and bed stone so this suggests a weight of perhaps half a ton.

The runner is rotated by a T-shaped iron axle called a stone spindle. The top of the T, the rind, fits into two grooves hollowed out in the underside of the runner; this can be seen if one looks down into the hole in the centre of the runner. The axle continues down through a wooden bushing, the boss, in the hole in the bed stone.

I believe the iron part of the stone spindle is always attached to an upright shaft of mountain ash (*Sorbus*). In the mill I examined in Pashki the shaft was reinforced with two iron rings at the point where the iron was let into it. This shaft is in turn

Fig. 253 & 255

let into a long groove in the top part of the crown; the groove is cut from the *side* of the trunk and into the center. The shaft is then kept in place by two wedges.

The crown is made of pine wood (*Pinus gerardiana*). A horizontal wreath of vanes, numbering 14-24, are slotted into the crown at an angle. When the rotation of the wheel brings a vane directly under the falling water, the angle of the vane

Fig. 255: The crown of a watermill. The slot in the side of the crown is seen here; it will receive the upright shaft. The stone pivot that the whole axle rests upon can also be seen under the crown. From the Parun Valley. Photo: L.E. 1954.

30. This is true for the whole of Afghanistan, Iran, the Mediterranean countries, and the Faroe Isles! In the rest of Scandinavia and in Northern Europe it rotates clockwise.

Fig. 256: A crown wheel being trimmed out of a pine trunk, (incidentally, it was being made by Gul Mohammad's son, cf. L.E. 1972: fig. 23). Pashki. Photo: K.F. 1953.

Fig. 257: From under a millhouse in Keshtagrom, showing the water channel, the crown wheel, the stone pivot resting in the socket, the sprattle beam and the tentering rod. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 258: Inside Said Ghulam's mill in Keshtagrom. The women are waiting while their grain is being ground to flour. The levers for raising the tendering rod – and thereby the runner millstone – are seen on the floor. Photo: L.E. 1970. cf. picture 106, Edelberg & Jones 1979, from the same room.

should be perpendicular to the water-pressure. The crown ends in a stone pivot (presumably of quartzite) that fits into a socket (also of some hard type of stone) that is fixed to a sturdy, though quite narrow, piece of wood, the sprattle beam.

The sprattle beam is in fact a lever, used for raising the top stone, the runner. It rests on the river bed at one end and, tilting slightly upwards, is attached at the other end by mortice, tenon and peg to the tentering rod, which continues up through the floor.

Fig. 254 & 258

The tentering rod, the drawbar in this mechanism, passes through a beam that marks the threshold between the mill itself and the waiting room. Here the tentering rod is held up by a dowling pin (the tentering yoke) which passes through it parallel to the threshold. The tentering yoke does not rest directly on the threshold: at either side of the rod a wedge has been inserted between the yoke and the threshold. The rod can be raised by inserting two levers – probably oak sticks – at either side of the rod and driving them in a little or prying them up, so that the wedges can be pushed a bit further in, thus keeping the tentering rod in the required position.

The effort needed for this is not so strenuous as one might think. The sprattle beam is a lever with its fulcrum at the point where it rests on the stones of the river bed. From here to the point where the weight is placed (the stone pivot) is approximately ⅓ of the length of the whole sprattle beam. This means that the energy needed to lift the runner at the other end of the beam (i.e. with the tentering rod)

Fig. 259: The water to propel a mill is held back here by a board, a sluice. Photo: L.E. 1964.

is correspondingly ⅓ of the runner's weight. If the runner weighs 0.2 ton (= 200 kg) one only has to lift 66 kg – the weight of a man. So by putting one's weight on the smaller lever-sticks that lift the tentering yoke, and thereby the tentering rod, one can raise the runner from the bed stone.

To start a mill working, one has to raise the tentering yoke a few millimetres, so that the runner is no longer interlocked with the bed stone, and then open the sluice that keeps the water back. Once the water starts tumbling down the channel, the wheel will rotate and the mill will be working – that is, *if* it is not bewitched.

Fig. 257

The water is led to the mill in a channel made from a tree trunk. In Nuristan it falls steeply, directed perpendicularly at the vanes to the right of the mill's axle (as seen from the direction of the current) and so drives the millstone round anti-clockwise. When the mill is not in use, this channel is closed with a little board, a sluice. Where the channel goes in under the mill, one sometimes sees a worn-out

Fig. 266

millstone leaning against the wall, preventing the water from splashing up and soaking it.

The length of the channel varies of course from one mill to another. In Parun, which is an open U-shaped valley due to glaciation, it is sometimes difficult to get the water to fall from a sufficient height, especially if the mills are situated in the meadows or cultivated areas in the main valley, so as to be close to the village.

Fig. 261

Here channels are built, often two or three alongside each other, leading water from the main river and running next to it for a few hundred yards, but keeping their level instead of falling.

A wooden channel then leads the water abruptly down to each mill. In this way one often sees a whole row of mills along the riverside. There seems to be a mill for each clan or lineage.

The water-power of the tributaries is of course also utilized, not only in Parun but everywhere in Nuristan. On the tributary flowing from the Kamah Pass down to Shtiwe there are several mills placed above each other, so that the same water is used to power them. (This is also shown from Badamuk, Upper Bashgal, in Edelberg & Jones 1979, picture 107.)

At the torrent between Kamdesh and Binagrom similar arrangements have been made. This is the setting of the story about Torag Merak[31]: he wanted to demonstrate his wealth and increase his prestige, so one day when his huge flock of goats were being milked, he let the milk drive the wheels of the watermills, and thus ground one seer of flour (about 7 kg). My guess is that he borrowed the whole series of mills for this purpose, so that the same milk was used over and over again; even so – to see all those goats gathered around the uppermost channel must have been a delightful sight.

In some places, specially in Parun, the level of a tributary is maintained by leading a water channel along the top of an embankment[32] which must be built higher and higher as it crosses the meadows, finally delivering its water to a mill.

Fig. 260: There is an artificial water channel on top of this little embankment, leading from a tributary of the Parun. Where it ends, a wooden channel leads water under the mill; the water gushing out towards us is either surplus water or else there is a hole in the bank. The têpe of Pronz is seen in the background. Photo: L.E. 1954.

31. Torag Merak was the grandfather of Mohd. Afzal, (cf. fig. 103, 122 and 134, showing the quintuple house in Kamdesh). He was also the man who entered into brotherhood with Sir George Scott Robertson.
32. These embankments (not to be confused with dams built across streams to form mill ponds), could, when found for example in flat country in northern Europe, possibly help archaeologists track down horizontal watermills from antiquity or the early middle ages (Edelberg, 1960).

Fig. 261: Watermills below Pashki with winter stables in the background. Photo: L.E. 1948. cf. also Edelberg & Jones 1979: picture 125, L.E. 1952 (Næsgaardsbogen): p. 24 & 25, and L.E. 1972: fig. 24.

This book deals principally with the ingenuity of the carpenter, but the work of the carpenter and the smith are very integrated in the building of a mill, and as the explanations hitherto have mainly concerned the blacksmith, I will now return to the carpenter.

Fig. 262-264

July 1970 Said Ghulam, *bari* of Keshtagrom, told me in what order the various parts of Abdul Mohammad's mill were built:

1) The floor that supports the millstones was built.
2) Next the walls surrounding the mill were made of really heavy timber halved together.
3) Finally the "waiting" room was built of timber frames and masonry.

Fig. 262 & 263: The recorded mill, belonging to Abdul Mohammad, of Keshtagrom, seen from the back and the front. (The tree pierces the stone waiting room wall; shown on plan). Photo: L.E. 1964.

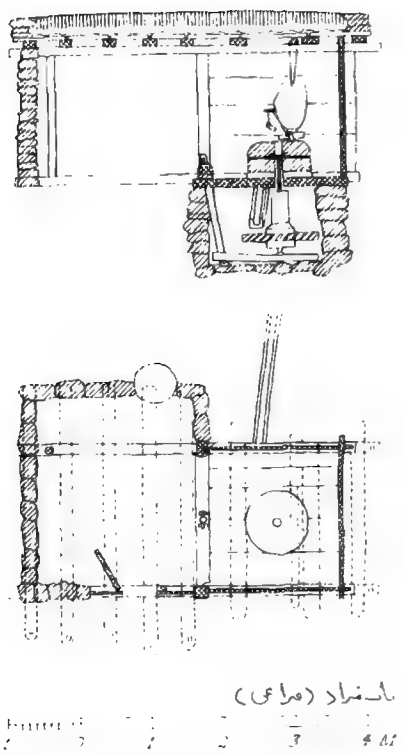


Fig. 264: Watermill from Keshtagrom, belonging to Abdul Mohammad, surveyed and measured on the 8th of August, 1964 by L.E. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

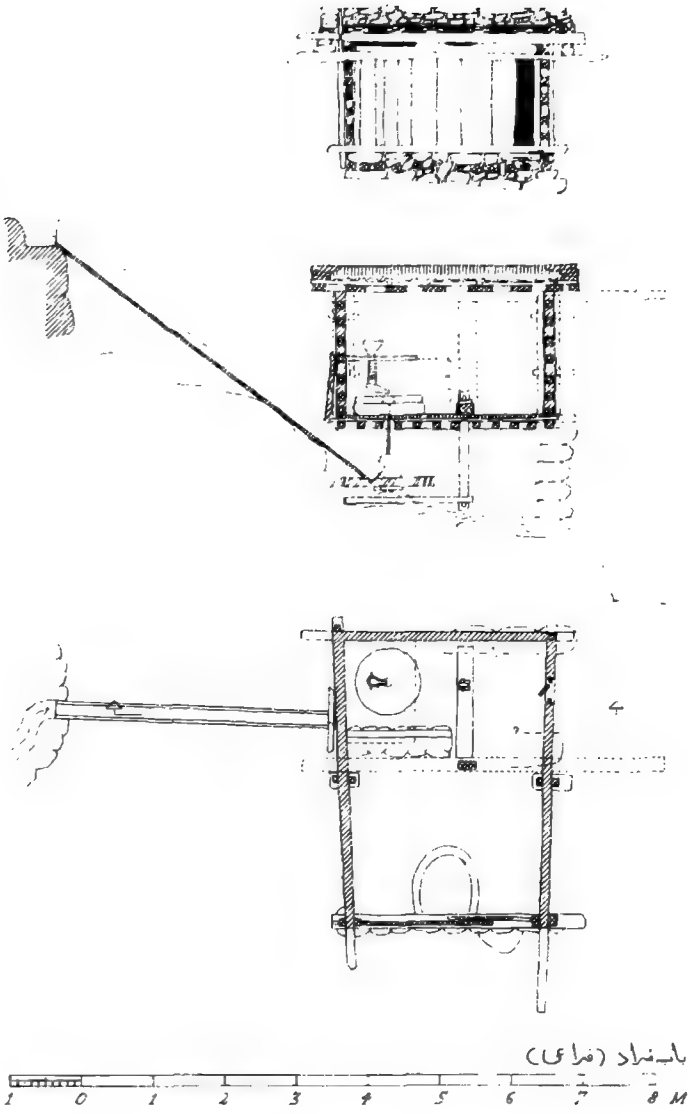


Fig. 265: Watermill from Zhönchigal, recorded on the 18th of July, 1964 by L.E. Drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.

Fig. 265-267

In the mill recorded from Zhönchigal all four walls are timber frames and masonry. These were presumably built simultaneously. The corners of this millhouse are quite securely built: in one of the corners a vertical pole goes through all the horizontal wall-timbers where they cross over each other. The other corner is maybe not quite so strong, but the roof undoubtedly weighs down the crossing timbers in the corner so effectively that the back wall will not be shaken loose by the operation of the mill. The threshold between the mill and the waiting room must in all instances be very sturdily built; the very function of the mill is dependent on its stability. It invariably rests on the same floor as the bedstone and is usually prevented from becoming dislocated by being jointed into the walls at either end (I forgot to note this in Zhönchigal). A door in the panelled front wall opens onto the "waiting" room. The uprights at either end of this wall not only go through the head and sill of the wall but also through the beam that carries the eaves. There is a fireplace to the left of the entrance.

Fig. 266 & 267: The recorded mill at Zhönchigal. Picture 266: the water channel is glimpsed to the left, and above this a redundant millstone leans against the wall, protecting the wood from spray. The front wall is panelled. Picture 267: the mill seen from the other side. See also interior: picture 272. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Fig. 268: Said Ghulam's mill in the lower part of Keshtagrom. (Note basket, to be carried on one's back, next to doorway). Photo: Ulf Timmermann 1970. cf. picture 258: interior from the same mill.

Fig. 269: A millhouse from Ashpai (south-east of Keshtagrom and Kamdesh on a tributary of the Kunar River). Like the mill shown from Zhönchigal, the same type of wall encloses both the mill itself and the waiting room, and so must have been built simultaneously. Photo: L.E. 1949.

The carpenter Said Ghulam also has a mill of his own, situated on the Nechingal River in the *bari* quarters of Keshtagrom – the lower part of the village. It is built entirely of very heavy horizontal planks. These are halved together in the two corners of the waiting room, and in the walls around the mill itself they are received at the corners (and the door-post) by long vertical notches cut into heavy uprights.

As regards the mills in Kamdesh, they seem to be halved together at the corners, while the division between waiting room and mill is marked by a timber receiving the planks on either side.

Fig. 270: From inside a watermill in Parun (Pronz?). Note the hopper, suspended by chains (made of willow boughs?). The lever stick used for adjusting the tentering yoke leans against the wall to the right. Photo: L.E. 1953.

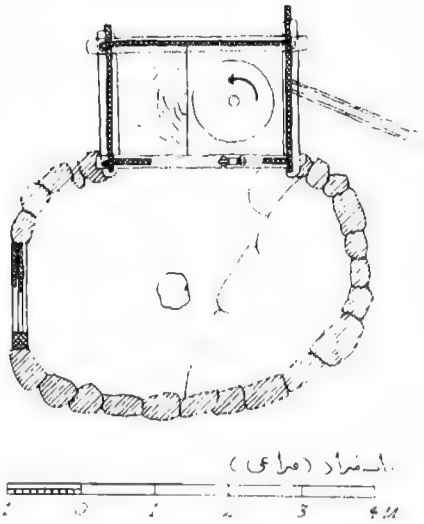


Fig. 271: Plan of a watermill in Pashki, May 1948. To the left of the millstone is a lower-lying shelf for the flour to collect on. The rocks in the sitting room form a shelf where sacks and wooden vessels for storing grain and flour are placed. In the centre of the room there is a fireplace. Surveyed by L.E. and drawn by Babamorad Feraghi.
[L.E. does not state whether this is the same mill as the "bewitched" one Gul Mohammad consulted him about in 1949 – Ed.]

The building procedure is probably the same in the Parun Valley, i.e. the sequence of floor and walls. Here the waiting room is usually built entirely of stone, and the mill compartment of broad heavy planks; these are placed horizontally in the walls leading off the waiting room, while I believe the wall "behind" the millstones is always constructed of vertical boards (where these adjoin the planks of the side walls they are possibly let into a vertical notch). All the boards fit into grooves in the head and sill.

Abdul Mohammad, a landowner living in lower Keshtagrom, and Said Ghulam, a *bari* from Keshtagrom, are both owners of a watermill, and they told me in 1964 and 1970 respectively, that others using their mill must pay 1/15 of the flour ground there as a mill charge.

As a mill cannot be left while it is working, meals are taken there and for this reason a fireplace is found in most mills. Bread can be made while waiting; in Nuristan bread is always baked from freshly ground flour.

Fig. 272

The task of minding the mill is carried out by both men and women. While waiting for the flour to be ground a nap can safely be taken, as any irregularity in the operation of the mill is sufficient to awaken the soundest sleeper.

Watermills play an important part in Nuristani conceptions. The following myth, recorded by Georg Buddruss in the Parun Valley (Buddruss 1960), is included here as it deserves to reach a wider audience, including those who would otherwise only aquaint themselves with the technical aspect of mills.

It takes place in archaic times: The god Mara was arranging the world as we know it today, but the River Parun did not as yet flow through the valley. One day

Fig. 272: A man checking the flour-grinding. From inside the mill recorded from Zhönchigal – the shelf is also seen on the working drawings. Photo: L.E. 1964.

Mara sat down in the temple in the Upper Parun Valley and from his great chair he addressed the gods assembled there: "We must build a mill!" The gods asked him to do this himself. So he took some wheat-dough and shaped some boards, a water channel, a wheel and two millstones out of it. He then went to his stables and fetched out those goats that had recently given birth. He drove them to the water channel and there he milked them, letting the milk flow down over the wheel.[33] But the milk softened the dough, so that it got sticky and the wheel would not turn round. Mara had to admit that he had made some mistake. "I have made a mess of this job," he thought. He took wood and proper stones and built another mill. He then dug a river bed in the valley, and turned to Lunang[34] saying "Lunang, come down the valley". But the goddess was sulky and replied: "Why didn't you think of me in the first place? Try once again with the milk. I am hurt and won't come; I will not ring my bells". So Mara bowed down before her seven times and asked her once againt to come and drive the mill. But Lunang was still cross. Mara now went up the valley to Lunang's place, stroked her cheeks and kissed her. Lunang then said: "I did not want to come. But I am a woman and have a soft heart. Since you plead with me so, I shall come". Mara went back to his mill to watch Lunang

33. I wonder whether Torag Merak just wanted to demonstrate his wealth or was he possibly also competing with the gods?

34. To this day the inhabitants of Parun call the river Lunang. The river goddess, Lunang or Nang, is pictured as a beautiful young girl, decorated with little bells, but she can also be a turbulent, roaring river.

come: she came tumbling down and rushed at the mill-wheel; the wheel whirled round and a cloud of flour started to rise. When she came back underneath the mill she shouted at Mara: "Just as I wanted to carry on down the valley, anger came back to my heart. I will still continue, but with a metal mattock. With my fingernails I shall hollow out both banks. I will ravage the whole countryside". Then Mara again bowed down before her seven times and said: "You shall continue on your way, but without anger. You may rush towards your goal, but people have been created, and they need the water. Carry on, through one country after another and cleanse what is dirty; country by country you must purify what is dirty."[35]

So much for the myth. I have another little story, the moral of which is: those who go to the mill to grind grain can, of course, pass the time in other ways than tending the mill, but it is unwise to do so:

On the 21st of May, 1948 Akbar and I were nearing the Atsui Pass (N.N.E. of the Mum Pass) on our way from Pashki to Aspit, when we were overtaken by a man from Bragamatal. When we reached the pass I had many observations and notes to make, and the man hurried on his way to Kantiwo (Ktiwi). Akbar had, however, had time to get the following information from him:

A few days earlier the man had got wind of his wife being down in the mill with another man. He went down there and stabbed them both with his *katara* (Nuristani dagger). He thereupon fled, and was now on his way to live with the malik of Kantiwo for a year. As he came from a different valley the malik was not obliged to denounce him. He could return to Bragamatal when a year had passed and pay the village a fine of one goat. In the meantime his small children would be looked after by his brother.

Finally, I would like to mention a toy watermill woven of osiers. I found it deserted but still working in a tiny stream near Zhönchigal. It illustrates how resourceful the Nuristanis can be: it does not have a vertical axle like the watermills that children see everywhere about them in Nuristan; it has a horizontal axle, like a Vitruvius-mill.[36] It works as an undershot water wheel. I should think that the nearest real undershot wheel is many, many miles away from Nuristan. It is apparently not only Mara who is creative in Nuristan.

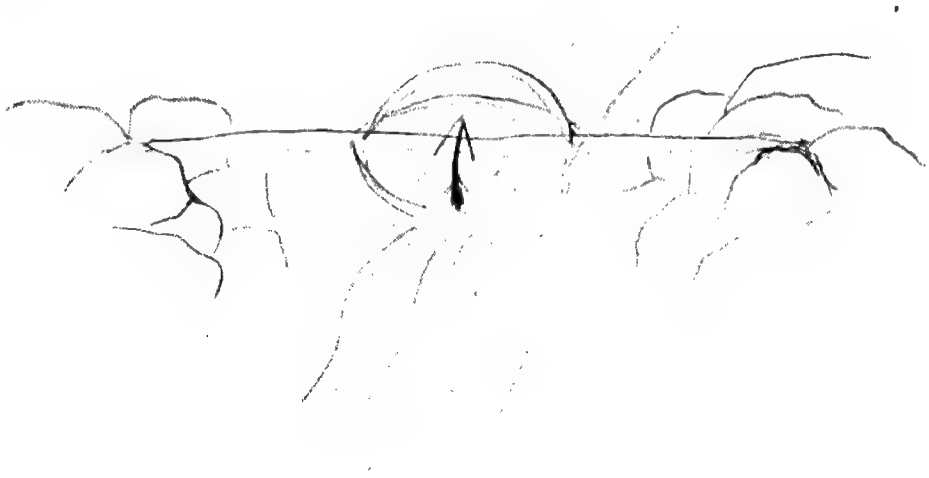


Fig. 273: Sketch by L.E.: A toy watermill.

35. The Parun word *ḍigər* can both mean physically "dirty" and morally "cross" or "bad".
36. So called because Caesar's architect Vitruvius was the first one to describe it.

XI: Changes

By Schuyler Jones

It is perhaps worth recording some of the changes that were appearing in Nuristani villages in the 1960's. Between 1960 and 1965 the 'guest room' or 'corner room' – a square room constructed at one end of the verandah – became popular in Keshtagrom and began to be copied in some other villages in the Lower Bashgal Valley. In 1960 there was a small shop in Kamdesh – a room in a private house – which offered manufactured cloth, cotton, needles, snuff boxes, tobacco, and other goods. Although this was an innovation that one would expect to spread rapidly, ten years later there were still scarcely any shops to be found elsewhere in Nuristan. This was not due to lack of demand for the goods they offered, but due to an unwillingness on the part of villagers to engage in petty trading – an activity they associate with Afghans, their traditional enemies. "We are *not* shopkeepers," one man explained disgustedly.

In the Lower Bashgal in the early 1960's one could occasionally find a house with a small glass window set in one wall. Six or eight years later a few glass windows began appearing in some houses in Waigal Valley, and in Waigal village itself, it became popular in the mid 1960's to whitewash house fronts. At this same time a few of the more important village elders, such as Hadji Azizulla of Kegal, were starring to build guest houses. For this purpose they brought Afghan carpenters in from Jalalabad. Instead of building in the traditional Nuristani village style, these men not unnaturally produced houses of the kind they were accustomed to making in Afghan villages.

In the Lower Bashgal Valley it had long been a common practice to make very large, broad notched planks as staircases up the outside of the house, although the ordinary notched log ladder was still seen everywhere. In 1960 some of the notched planks had been equipped with hand railings. In the 1970's this was carried a stage further on some houses with the construction of wooden staircases, complete with handrails.

On 26 Aug. 1969 in Zhönchigal Mohd. Amin Khan (retired Afghan Army officer, but Nuristani and from Zhönchigal) gave this information about changes in the way houses were constructed:

"In the old days when they made the *ama,* they fixed the corners with a pole. Each timber had a hole through it near the end, and where the timbers overlapped at the corners, they lined up the holes and ran a pole down from the top to secure the corners. Now they just adze the timbers off level so that they sit well, and then leave it. In the old times when they put the stones between the timbers, they didn't care if the stones projected out beyond the timbers. Now they try to fit the stones so that when the clay is applied, the wall will be fairly smooth. In the old days the *ama* usually had eight *pico* = two on each wall. Now they often make the *ama* with only six *pico;* the wall with the door doesn't have any."

Nuristani building components in the Moesgaard Museum

By Klaus Ferdinand

Moesgaard Museum was first opened to the public on Sept. 10, 1970. On this occasion a replica of a Nuristani *āmā* from the Waigal region was inaugurated. It had been reconstructed to a scale of 4:5 on the basis of Lennart Edelberg's surveys, drawings and photographs, and it was built by the Moesgaard reconstruction carpenters Egon Hansen and Viggo Thomsen in close co-operation with Lennart Edelberg.

The Danish collections from Nuristan and the bordering districts were mostly collected by Lennart Edelberg. The items bought on the first two expeditions belong to the Danish National Museum, Ethnographic Dept., but have been deposited at Moesgaard Museum since it opened in 1970; this concerns inventory numbers E.768-1059 and E.1438 from 1948-49, and numbers E.1701-1771 and E.2095-2099 from 1953-54. The remaining articles are in the possession of Moesgaard Museum, Ethnographic Dept. and comprise inventory numbers EA99B – 1-154 from 1964, EA167 – 1-17 from 1970, and miscellaneous other collections: EA295 – 1, EA298 – 1, and EA407 – 1-15. The illustrations show how some original building components have been used in the reconstructed *āmā*. (Photos: Poul Dehlholm).

Fig. 274: The vertical plank (no.E 851) supporting the shelf that runs across the back wall of the āmā. *It is decorated with carvings representing rank symbols and can only be used by high-status landowners, (cf. caption to fig. 24). Note the necklace round the lower circle.*

Fig. 275: View of the entrance to the ämä *at Moesgaard. The left panel flanking the door was collected by Lennart Edelberg in 1948-49. (no. EA 99B-I). To the left of this the antlers of a horned sheep are seen resting on a* nakur'ä; *they are from the sheep sacrificed by Abdullah Wakil of Keshtagrom when the* ämä *was completed in 1970.*

Fig. 276: The interior of the ämä *with Lennart Edelberg's collected items. The column in the background to the right is the back right-hand one in the room; it was collected in Wama in 1948 and is also shown on figs. 75 & 76. (no. E 852). Photo by Mariann Favrbo.*

Epilogue

In the context of wooden constructions the Norwegian stave churches are architecturally and with respect to their carving the best that Europe has produced. None the less, the majority of the stave churches were destroyed during the 19th century. In Norway there was little understanding of their artistic value and there were no preservation laws to protect them.

The stave church in Vang was one of the most remarkable. In 1835 a local decision was made to pull down the church to make way for a new building in stone. The Norwegian artist Professor I. C. Dahl did everything in his power to have the church preserved or rebuilt in Bergen, but in vain. Then the king of Prussia, Friderich Wilhelm IV, suddenly bought it. The church was transported over the Norwegian mountains, placed on rafts, and carried over the sea to the Oder to be erected in Brückenberg in Riesengebirge, where the king with great ceremony inaugurated the building on the 28th of July, 1844. This event caused a stir in Norway and the stave churches which were subsequently saved in the Norwegian valleys are today a valued part of the country's national heritage.

It is instructive at the threshold of a new age in the Hindu-Kush to keep these historical experiences in mind.

Lennart Edelberg [1976]

Glossary

The Waigali terms are indicated by Wg.
L.E. has in places also given the equivalent Kati term:
B. (lower Bashgal) and Ke. (Keshtagrom).
Prasun (or Paruni): P. is also sometimes divided into Pa. (Pashki) or Pr. (Pronz).
Certain building terms that occur very seldom in the text, drawings or captions, or which are difficult to explain concisely, are not included here. Omitted are also the directional terms in the Prasun-speaking region: na-, sa-, za-, and wa-, and derivations thereof; these are explained in the text after L.E.'s diagram, fig. 82.

A

ačli-kunə: dado in the facade of the wooden gallery. Kati.
adz'ā: landowner (the "upper class"). Kati.
ak'eço: see fig. 131. Kati.
ələra warek: "upper house", i.e. hearth room. Pa.
ămā/ama: hearth room, main living room. Wg.
amō: hearth room, main living room. Kati.
amal: house serving religous purposes in pre-Muslim times. P.
aneg-lek: hearth, fireplace. Pa.
aṇtala-siŋ: goat's horns crossing over each other. Wg.
ar'ŏ: hearth, fireplace. Kati.
aš'ēpur: hearth room, main living room. Wg.
aštərə-garə: roof joists or rafters. Kati.
aštərə-katə: roof joists or rafters. B.
ateram-ganja/-gai: store-room under the hearth room. Wg.
atrožan: landowner (the "upper class"). Wg.
aṭä: hearth, fireplace. B.
əwaik: louver over hearth. P.

B

baṇ'ē: horizontal wall-timbers (placed at a distance from each other, with stones in between). Wg.
bari: artisan, craftsman, ranking socially below the landowners.
bāšpē: three-legged table made of iron bars welded together, supporting a carved wooden bowl.
berim-ganja/-gai: store-room under the verandah, in front of the *ateram-ganja*. Wg.
bəṭ: verandah. P.
bitäla/bit'elə: large wooden slabs in the roof construction, placed on top of the roof joists or rafters. Kati.
bitəl-štyü: "plank-columns", the pillars between the openings in the facade of the wooden gallery. Kati.

C

ceř: beam on top of the row of pillars down the middle of the wooden gallery, (at right angles to the roof beams). Ke.
ċik: notched log-ladder. B.
cič: notched log-ladder. Wg.
čiwil: see fig. 94. Pr.
čŏ̄: notched log-ladder. Wg.

D

dalič̆am: roof joists/rafters. Wg.
de'rik: opening in the front wall of house (in the *berim-ganja?*). Wg.
dĭš: chest for storage (of wheat?). Pr.
dō/dōə/dô/dōr/dă̆(ə): door. Wg. (Kati: du)
dōkuna: half-door. Wg.
dōpača: panels flanking the "front" door. Wg.
döšei: quern, (hand-?). Wg.
döšpatä: table that the hand-quern is placed upon. Wg.
du: door. Kati.
duk: trapdoor, leading down from the hearth room. Kati.
dü: trapdoor leading down from the hearth room. Wg.
dukalä: verandah. Wg.
dümdana: "drying" poles placed over the hearth, at right angles to the front wall. Wg.
düri: food safe (built into the wall). Wg.
düšö-ganja: quern room, (in this case underneath the *berim-ganja*). Wg.

düšt: measurement, corresponding to the distance from elbow to fingertips. Kati.
duw'ok: window. Kati.

G

gĕḍi: corner (where two walls meet? outdoor?) Kati.
guškunə: timber submerged in the floor, supporting pillars. Kati.
guṭu: "lower house", i.e. lower storey of house. Pa.
gy'ü-tā: privy. Kati.

I

ičeg: roof rafters/joists. Pr.
ištīk: shelf on top of pillars surrounding the hearth. P.

K

kantar kōt: special house type that was the house of the priest in the pre-Muslim period. Wg.
kardama: board on edge, forming a parapet (on a bridge?). Wg.
karmərі: "ears" on the upper end of a pillar, that grip around a beam. Kati.
kavor: wooden bowl used when making bread-dough.
kəṭə: first layer of planks or poles on top of the roof beams. Pa.
kirau: traction fork used by women tilling the soil. Wg.
kirau-ṣiŋ: goat's horns (and carved decorations representing a certain kind of horns). Wg.
krö: enclosed verandah/wooden gallery. Wg.
křum: roof. Kati.
kuli-kaṭə: a wooden, carved frieze in the front facade, usually inserted level with the window(s) opening onto the *berimganja*. Kati.

M

maček/mačäk: an "extra" roof beam, lying under and parallel to the main roof beams, placed on two hearth pillars and a little longer than the distance between these. Wg.
ma'köu: open space beneath the *berimganja*. Wg.
makř'ik: horizontal wall timber, placed at intervals, (with rubble/stone infilling between them). Kati.
mūk: clay, /a layer in the roof construction consisting of clay. B.
mutu-du: half-door. Kati.
mřī: a layer in the roof construction consisting of clay. B.

N

nakur'ä/nakola: wooden clamps that are built into and stabilize walls. Three or more are placed horizontally, at right angles to the wall, above each other, protruding either side of the wall. They have a hole in both ends, through which a vertical pole barely the height of the wall, a *pik'ū*, is passed, on both sides of the wall. Wg.
nĩnzə: roof beams. P.

P

palae: cooperative herding and dairy-producing union. Wg.
pal'ol: layer of pulverized stone in the roof construction. Kati.
pal'al: layer of pulverized stone in the roof construction. Ke.
paṭ-kəřü: wooden gallery/enclosed verandah. Kati.
paṭ-křum: verandah without a roof. Kati.
pik'ū: see *nakur'ä*. Wg.
piy'ō: fascia board. Kati.

S

safed-posh: white clad Nuristani (from the Parun).
sagam: platform, built to commemorate a person, usually alongside a path, and overlooking a fine view. Also called *wřikā̃/kunā*. Wg.
šāl: stable, both for summer and winter use. Wg.
ser: weight measure. Wg. 1 *ser* is approx. 7 kg. or 15 pounds.
seř: beam on top of the row of pillars down the middle of the wooden gallery, (at right angles to the roof beams). Kati.
šewala: socially low-placed person, not owning land, and considered inferior to the *bari*, although they make some handicraft, such as baskets and clay pots. They often work for the *atrožan*.
siah-posh: black clad Nuristani.
šilni(g) warek: "house for sitting" (Buddruss). The storey under the hearth room (?) L.E. Pr.
šin: plank placed horizontally, giving access from one rooftop to another. Wg.
ṣiŋ: horns (of a goat). Wg.
šiř'i: notched log-ladder. Kati.
söbumpřæ: cantilever. Wg.
štümbələ: measurement, corresponding to length between fingertips with outstretched arms. Kati.
štyü: pillar. Kati. See also *üštum*.
ṣut: the floor-area between the four hearth

pillars, or the walls surrounding the hearth room. Pa.

T

tac'ārī: layer in roof construction consisting of wood shavings. Kati.

təpa: tripod. Pr.

U

uglə: roof beam. B.

ukstok: top storey of house. Pr.

uluma: low status landowner.

ülyum leptega əwaik: smoke hole. Pa.

ün'og: firedog, andiron. Pr.

üštum/ustū(n)/etc.: pillar. All the Nuristani names for pillars that end with -ūn, -ū̃, derive from the Sanskrit: *sthūṇā,* while those ending on -um have been mixed up with the Sanskrit: *stambha*, i.e. Wg.: *uštum*, Kati: *(u)štum*, and Prasun: *ūštup/uštobu/üstyū.*

utā/utah: priest (pre-Muslim).

uträkuna/utrey: shelf across the back wall of the hearth room. Wg.

W

wal'tä/watəl: slabs of wood used in roof construction. Pr.

wā̃s: trapdoor leading down from the hearth room. Wg.

watələ: wooden slabs used in the roof construction. Pa.

w'enāř: facade of the top storey, in front of the gallery. Kati.

w'enāř-katə: facade of the top storey, in front of the gallery. Ke.

wičyog: roof rafters/joists. Pa.

wrāš/wřš: roof beams. Wg.

wugřə: roof beams (Kati), also called *ařg'u* or *uglə.* B.

Y

yok: hearth room, or the room beneath the top storey. Pr.

yüs: layer in the roof construction consisting of plants, leaves or straw. Kati.

Z

žâm: roof rafters/joists. Wg.

zī: (front-) door. P.

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277: Map of Nuristan,
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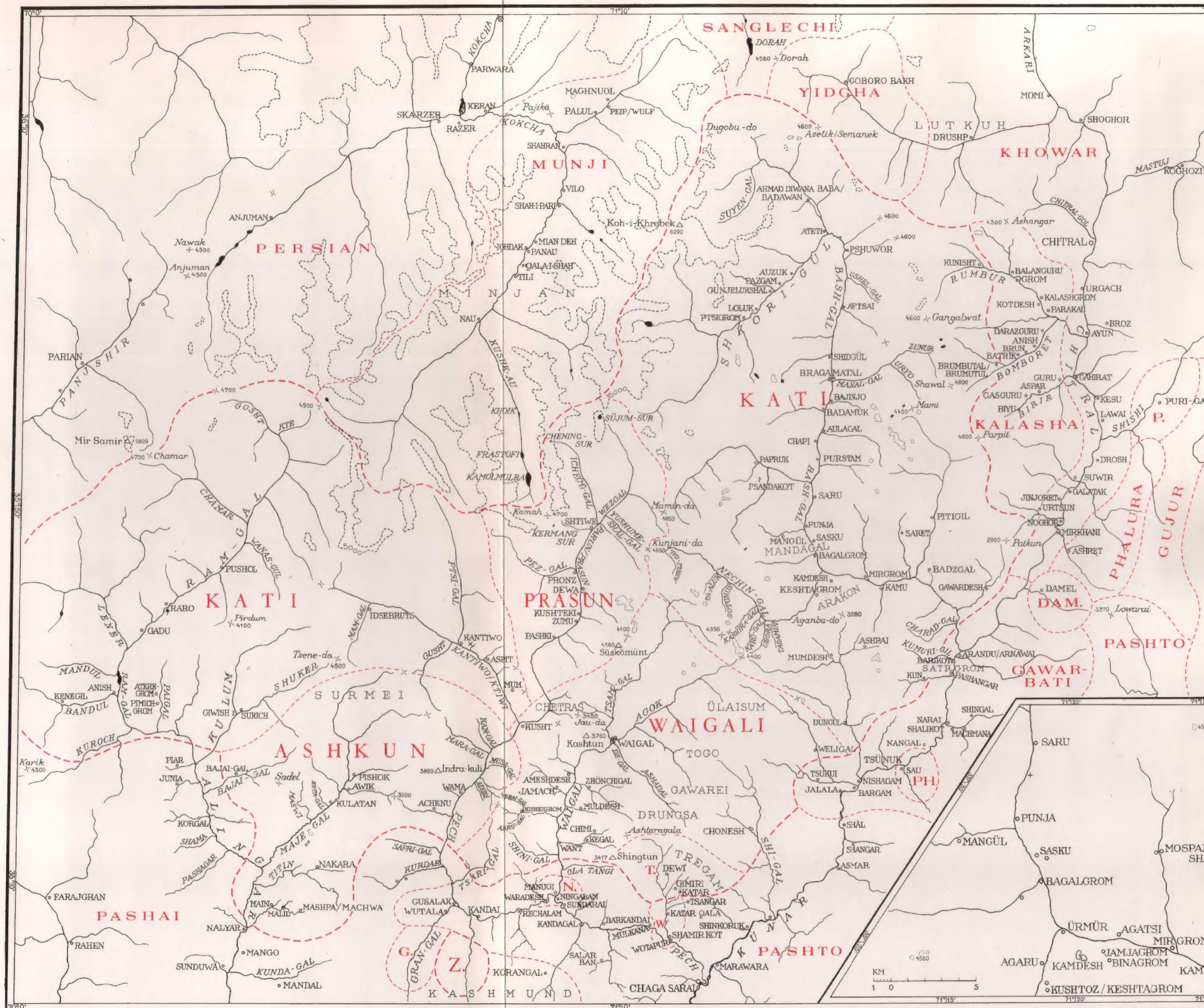

T KUH, region
h, mountain pasture
h, pass
H-GAL, river
H, lake
,Kashtun, summit
,3760 metres above sealevel
ITRAL, town
IGAL, village/hamlet
er/ruin
nes of Lapis Lazuli
atite quarry near KANTIWO
ng-i-navishta
ck marking

OMETRES
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RISTAN (1978)